SOME METHODS OF TEACHING RELIGION

SOME METHODS OF TEACHING RELIGION

A SURVEY, SUBMITTED IN PART FULFILMENT OF THE PRESCRIBED EXERCISES LEADING TO THE DEGREE OF PH.D., NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND

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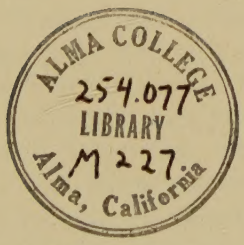

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INTRODUCTION

THE writer of this survey of *Some Methods of Teaching Religion* graduated in the Faculty of Arts, National University of Ireland, as an intern student of its Constituent College in this City of Dublin, at the close of the session 1914-15. Two years later, Mr. John T. McMahon, as he then was, completed the Courses, theoretical and practical, in my Department (Education), leading to the Higher Diploma in Education, our principal professional qualification for teachers. His probation work in class-instruction was taken under my supervision, and was of such distinctive quality that it was no surprise to find his name on our Honour List, a rank attained on the average by less than a quarter of the successful graduates. This was in the year 1917.

Three years later, Mr. McMahon completed with me the Courses of Special Study for the Degree of the M.A. in Educational Science, and took the Examination for it with most exceptional success. All his papers on the prescribed subjects—Plato, The Renaissance, Contemporary French Education—were elaborately thorough and well balanced: but the required Minor Dissertation, which he elected to write on *Catechetical Instruction*, was the section that best exhibited his individual aptitudes. Its preparation for publication was, after full consideration, wisely deferred, for its writer, soon to be a priest, was certain to have, in the years of active organisation that lay immediately ahead, opportunities altogether exceptional of developing a personal policy, a policy that would have to stand the test of experience.

These opportunities extended over the years 1922-27, as an initial period. Father McMahon, as Diocesan Inspector

of Catholic Schools, and Organiser of Religious Instruction, with headquarters at Perth, West Australia, had immediately to provide for the young people of a territory five or six times the size of Ireland. Some of the 50,000 Catholics under the See of Perth were concentrated in the capital of the State, in a few other urban centres, and in special settlements along or near the south-western coast-line of the continent. Here the provision of systematic teaching of Religion was, of course, already substantially secure. The real problem was that presented by the scattered families of new settlers, often isolated units, placed at great distances from each other and from the centre of the diocesan activities. The children of these families had to be provided for. Their parents very frequently, even with good-will, could not be relied on in respect of either time or knowledge.

The requisite organisation was provided within two years by Father McMahon, and has proved markedly successful not only in securing the regular progress of these settlers' children over that Australian Bush area, but also in arousing the interest, and stimulating the Christian zeal, of their fathers and mothers. The organiser has utilised in an apt combination the principles and methods of the correspondence system, joining to them, in a way that is specially his own, the personal note and impulse which are so essential in Religious Education. The Divine Model, at once of the teacher with authority and of the helpful friend, instructed, directed, stimulated towards personal action, provided with motives and aims, the work of those who were His disciples. Under difficult conditions as to times, places, and means, Father McMahon succeeded, in the years 1923-27, in bringing over 1,000 Catholic children of the West Australian Bush under systematic education in Catholic Religious Knowledge and Practice. He was even successful, after four years of progress, in bringing no small number of them from remote areas to a Summer School on the Pacific coast, thus securing a start in providing them, for at least a few weeks, with educational values that no correspondence system can quite equal—those that are found in a regular class-system in an

ordinary Catholic school. The account of how this many-sided organisation was built up, with some records of its methods, its working materials, and of the correspondence of pupils, of instructors, of parents and observers, will appear this autumn of 1928 as an academic publication issued from the Department of Education, University College, Dublin. It formed the supplemental section of the Dissertation presented by Father McMahon in December, 1927, as part of the required exercises for the Degree of Ph.D. in the National University of Ireland. The merits of his Dissertation as a whole, both on the speculative and on the practical side, and his previous high record in post-graduate courses and examinations relating to Education, naturally secured his admission, in May, 1928, to that degree without further tests.

The larger portion of that Doctoral Dissertation is here presented in an abridged form. Before leaving Ireland for Australia; while working in Australia; during six months spent in investigation and study at the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., and at various other centres of work in the United States; again in Ireland to complete the requisite academic attendance and study—in all these places and at all these periods Dr. McMahon had perseveringly explored the literature and the practical applications of many catechetical processes, old and new. This was always done with the very specific object of his own duties, their needs, their conditions, fully kept in view. This portion of his survey of contemporary Plans will, therefore, like the complete Dissertation, be found to be different in character and outlook from the usual type of dissertations for advanced degrees. The practical and even individual aim controls all that he writes. Either explicitly or implicitly, systems and methods are examined for what they may give to an actual worker under limitations specific indeed, yet affording many analogies with other regions of Catholic educational endeavour, to be found today on every continent. These personal purposes, these existing demands, have accordingly to decide the investigator's

preferences, to guide his judgements, to mould the expression of his opinions. All this, it is submitted, adds to the values, at once academical and practical, speculative and executive, of these surveys of Methods of Teaching Religion.

T. CORCORAN, S.J.

University College, Dublin
August 15, 1928.

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Note.—The following abbreviations are used in the text:

C.U.B.: *Catholic University Bulletin* (Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.).

C.E.R.: *Catholic Educational Review* (Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.).

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PART I

SOME METHODS OF TEACHING RELIGION

THE MUNICH METHOD

ORIGIN.

St Augustine's *De Catechizandis Rudibus* has exercised a long and lasting influence on catechetics. It is a classic in catechetical literature. The imprint of the principles and suggestions so generously given in that treatise is seen in the many reforms of method and text-book which we are discussing. A striking instance of this is the Munich Method of teaching Christian doctrine. "Begin with the story": this is the first article that the advocates of the Munich Method prescribe for their followers. From his twentieth chapter onwards, St Augustine shows how effectively that can be done. Starting with Adam, he shows how the Old Testament is the foundation and forerunner of the New. He goes back to the Old for the symbols of the New. In his doctrinal teaching he begins with symbols which prepare for and lead up to a fuller explanation. "For Moses struck the waters with a rod that this miracle might be wrought. Both are symbols of Holy Baptism, whereby the faithful pass over into a new life, but their sins like enemies are blotted out."[1] The teaching by parables of Christ is sufficient justification for this principle.

The Munich Method bears on its form and features unmistakable signs of relationship to *De Catechizandis Rudibus*.

"In 1832 Archbishop Gruber of Salzburg brought out his Catechism, which was based, as its title indicates, on

[1] *De Catechizandis Rudibus*, translated by P. J. Christopher (Catholic University Press, Washington, 1927), p. 87.

De Catechizandis Rudibus. In our own time J. Eising has shown conclusively that the famous 'Munich Method' of catechising is modelled on this treatise."[1]

In Germany, for many years, there was a sense of dissatisfaction with the system of catechising in use. A return to St Augustine's treatise helped to swell the chorus of discontent. Little was done, however, until about the year 1904, when the practical Catechists of Southern Germany met to discuss the situation, and to construct a way out. The leaders of the movement were teachers engaged in the work of catechising. The movement also gained some adherents among the theoretical exponents of the science. "It was launched by the Society of Catechists of Munich, and their official organ, *Katechetischen Blätter*, a paper in the field for a long time, was pressed into service for the discussion and diffusion of its plan of reform. Their efforts were ably seconded by the *Christlich-pädagogischen Blätter* of Vienna, the organ of the Society of Catechists of that city."[2]

It was called the "Psychological Method" because the Herbart-Ziller system was so strongly stressed, especially by the editor of the *Katechetischen Blätter*. It was also known as the "Stieglitz Method," from its chief exponent. Finally it became generally known as the "Munich Method" because of the impetus given to it by the members of the Society of Catechists of Munich.

Causes of Growth.

Drs. Gatterer and Krus summarise the causes of its growth under two headings: (1) negative factors, and (2) positive factors.

(1) *Negative Factors.*—(*a*) "The shortcomings of existing Catechisms and present-day catechetical methods, and the resultant dissatisfaction. Among such defects were enumerated: an over-abundance of material, which prevents

[1] *De Catechizandis Rudibus*, p. 6.

[2] *Theory and Practice of the Catechism*, M. Gatterer and F. Krus, translated by J. B. Culemans (F. Pustet and Co., N.Y., 1914), p. 72.

in most cases, where but a short period of time is available, a thorough exposition of the truths of faith; the use of abstract language, ill-suited to the child-mind; the treatment of the matter after the manner of scientific theology, setting out from abstract general concepts. This method was called the 'analytical' method, although in the phraseology of Aristotelian philosophy it should be called the 'synthetic' method."[1]

The movement grew out of a protest against the one-sided use of the old text-analysis method. The adherents of the Munich School opposed to this their own method founded on the Herbart-Ziller system. "The many objections urged against the 'analytical' method have to do not so much with the method itself, as with the one-sided use made of it; and on this point untrained catechists have much to answer for."[2]

(*b*) The lack of training for catechists was another negative factor in the reform movement. The theoretical training received then was given irrespective of principles, and no practical experience was open to students. The need of both theory and practice in the training of all intended for the catechetical office was apparent. The Munich School proposed to supply this and thus gained a great measure of support.

(2) *Positive Factors.*—Three methods of propaganda helped to give the Munich Method a much wider influence than would be possible through a local society. (*a*) The official organs of the Catechists of Munich and Vienna—*i.e.*, *Katechetischen Blätter* and *Christlich-pädagogischen Blätter*—made the propagation of the method the chief objective of their editorials. Another journal joined them, the *Katechetische Monatschrift* of Münster. In editorials, articles, comments, and criticisms this united Press made known the method and its principles to the readers of educational literature in Europe. (*b*) Conferences and courses on catechetical methods are held in Salzburg,

[1] *Theory and Practice of the Catechism*, p. 73.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 74.

Munich, Vienna, and Lucerne annually. For many sessions the discussions and courses were devoted to the Munich Method. In this way the teachers were influenced. (*c*) A final reason that did much to spread the method, originated in the desire to advance with the progressive pedagogy of the day. Herbart had reorganised secular work, and through his influence a great change had taken place. Ideals and methods were rapidly emerging in the teaching of the secular branches of study. Through all this catechetics remained static, clinging to the traditional methods, even though these were disregarded in other parts of the school. The Munich Method sought to correct this by applying the most approved rules of psychology to the teaching of Christian doctrine, appealing to all the faculties of the child's soul, and proceeding from the known to the unknown.

Aim of Munich Method.

(1) *Begin with a Story.*—"In the Munich School the instruction never begins with the catechetical questions. The aim is to capture the child's interest at the outset and to hold his attention throughout. In the method the instruction always begins with a story from life or from the Bible, with a catechetical, biblical, or historical picture, with a point of Liturgy, Church History, the Lives of the Saints, or some such objective lesson. The catechist then proceeds to evolve from the lesson the concepts which he is intent on developing, after which he proceeds to combine these concepts into the doctrine of the Catechism and to make the formal applications of the truth to the life of the child."[1]

(2) *Appeal to Head and Heart.*—"The Munich Method demands that both the cognitive and the appetitive side of the child's nature be taken into due consideration by the catechist. Simply to call forth concepts in the child's mind (appeal to the intellect), without at the same time setting his appetitive faculties in motion, would be to proceed in a one-

[1] "Notes on Education," Dr. Shields, *C.U.B.*, 1910, vol. xvi, pp. 269-270.

sided fashion. The imagination, the emotions or passions, and the will go to make up every concept. Consequently the catechist must not only explain to the pupil, *e.g.*, the concept of Heaven, but he must endeavour to present a picture of Heaven to the pupil's imagination, even though that picture be imperfect. He must, moreover, communicate this knowledge to the pupil in such a manner, that there is awakened in the pupil's soul a desire for Heaven (appeal to the emotions and passions). At the same time the catechist must strive to lead the pupil to conceive Heaven as something good and worthy of possession (appeal to the will). He must influence both the sensitive and the spiritual parts of the child's nature. Now the Psychological or Munich Method of catechisation takes all of these psychological facts into due consideration. For in the Presentation the catechist appeals to the imagination and the emotions or passions: in the Explanation and Application he appeals to the intellect and the will of the catechumens."[1]

The aim is reached through the Herbartian steps. The Munich Method is a means of using the Catechism text. It never proposes to do away with the Catechism. Accepting the Catechism as the answer to the question What should the children be taught ? its problem is rather, In what manner shall the matter be presented to the mind, so that the end may be attained ?—*i.e.*, what is the right method to be followed in catechetical instruction ? In the solution of that problem the Munich Method accepts Herbart as its guide.

Herbart: Its Guide in Method.

The Munich Method of teaching Christian doctrine thus owes much to Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841), the German educational psychologist. Herbart's Method is accepted; but his philosophy is rejected. Herbart taught that the soul is the resultant of education, that the mind is a receptacle into which knowledge is poured, and that in the

[1] *The Creed Explained*, Joseph J. Baierl (The Seminary Press, Rochester, N.Y., U.S.A.), p. vii.

fullest sense man is merely what he knows. The subject-matter becomes the important thing, because the teacher, through its use, creates the soul of the child. The fathers of the Munich Method could not accept that philosophy. Herbart is brought into the Christian doctrine class, and is commissioned to raise the standard of teaching there. Before his work begins, however, he is compelled to shed his philosophical tenets. The sane, solid, and tried philosophy of Aristotle, skilfully pruned by the scholastics under the foremanship of St Thomas Aquinas, is laid as the new foundation. With its roots sunk deep in the rich fertile soil of scholastic philosophy, the Herbartian plant, fed on a more life-giving sap, is brought into the religious school to bud and blossom.

It is not our purpose to discuss Herbart the educator. We refer the reader to any history of education and to John Adams's treatment in *Herbartian Psychology Applied to Education* (Boston, 1898). There is one principle in Herbart's psychology which our present purpose might allow mention of, " the apperception-masses." This is the big thing in the application of his psychology to the classroom.

Cardinal Newman defines the " apperception-mass " at its highest level in his lectures on *The Idea of a University*. Herbart's method has not always reached this high-water mark. If it consistently maintained the heights indicated by Newman's definition, much of the criticism of Herbartianism so prevalent to-day would be groundless. Newman pictures an ideal which Herbartianism has not succeeded in achieving consistently.

" Enlargement (of mind) consists, not merely in the passive reception into the mind of a number of ideas hitherto unknown to it, but in the mind's energetic and simultaneous action upon and towards and among those new ideas which are rushing in upon it. It is the action of a formative power, reducing to order and meaning the matter of our requirements; it is the making the objects of our knowledge subjectively our own, or, to use a familiar word, it is a digestion of what we receive, into the substance of our

previous state of thought; and without this no enlargement is said to follow. There is no enlargement, unless there be a comparison of ideas one with another, as they come before the mind, and a systematising of them. We feel our minds to be growing and expanding *then*, when we not only learn but refer what we learn to what we know already. It is not the mere addition to our knowledge that is the illumination; but the locomotion, the movement onwards, of that mental centre, to which both what we know and what we are learning, the accumulating mass of our acquirements, gravitates."[1]

" It is a digestion of what we receive into the substance of our previous state of thought. . . ."

This is better than Herbartianism. It is the true " apperception-mass," Herbart's Method. We make things our own by thinking. Like food, our facts are to be masticated if they are to be assimilated. We blend the old with the new. The mind picks up new knowledge in terms of old, and the result is a new thing, the amalgamation of the two. Knowing is a digestion, a correlation, a concentration, a unification, an apperceiving, a going from known to unknown. Many illustrations of " apperception-masses " have been written in text-books. Put some drops of different coloured ink quietly into a glass of clear water. Each drop remains apart, retaining its own peculiar colour. This represents the state of the mind into which an idea floats. No thinking is done, no action of mind takes place, and consequently nothing is assimilated. But put a spoon into the glass of water and stir it thoroughly. The colours are fused and we get a new thing. The different inks have each given something, but the result is a combination in which they are individually merged. This is the assimilation, digestion, apperception, which Newman postulates. The new is fused with the old, yielding a further new thing. This expresses the doctrine of correlation. Every item of knowledge is so thoroughly blended into the mass of our

[1] *The Idea of a University*, Cardinal Newman (Pickering and Co., London, 1881), fifth edition, p. 134.

previous knowledge, that it affects the old and is affected by it. Apperception is a digestion of the new. There is no change in the new ideas coming into the mind, if you keep each in its own corner as the separate drops of ink.

Adams gives the illustration of a man entering an empty house. He finds none to receive him and he does not remain there. But if he has friends to entertain him, he remains. We cannot teach anything unless there is a mass to receive it. Everything that enters the stream of consciousness is drafted into its own "apperceptive-mass."

The Herbartian Steps.

The Munich Method is also named the "Psychological Method," implicitly claiming by the use of this term that it is sound pedagogically. Were Herbartianism to attain that high-water mark consistently in the classroom, it would be safe to follow it. The advocates of the Munich Method insist that it proceeds from well-established facts of psychology. "The Munich Method demands, in the first place, that each lesson should constitute a catechetical or methodical unit—*i.e.*, should revolve around one theme or unit which the children should grasp clearly and distinctly."[1]

"In this method . . . several psychological elements are synthesised into one catechetical unit, to be used in each school-hour. Out of this synthesis result several catechetical questions and answers, which are, however, already intelligible to the pupils and are therefore, we may say, gathered as ripe fruit."[2]

Besides this "catechetical unit," the method relies on the Herbartian steps. In practice, the Munich Method is the application of the steps to the teaching of Christian doctrine. A series of five volumes gives in detail an American application of the steps to the teaching of Christian doctrine. Accepting the Baltimore Catechism as the prescribed text, a detailed explanation according to the Munich

[1] *The Creed Explained*, Joseph J. Baierl, p. iv.

[2] "Didactic Materialism and the Teaching of Religion," F. L. Kerze, *C.U.B.*, vol. xiv, p. 560.

Method has been prepared by the Rev. Joseph J. Baierl for children of the intermediate and higher grades. The method is seen in the model lessons based on the Herbartian steps which are given in this series. The explanations of any doctrine follow the order of the accepted five steps. Our criticism of the method will concentrate on the procedure which is adopted in this elaborate and detailed application of the Munich or Herbartian Method to the teaching of religion.

The Method Applied.—In the preface to *The Creed Explained,* Father Baierl explains the steps and the principles of psychology which underlie the method.[1] The explanations are based on the Baltimore Catechism, No. 2, and are written as an aid to catechists. Father Baierl distinguishes three essential steps: Presentation, Explanation, and Application. " To these are added three non-essential steps for formal reasons—*i.e.*, for the psychological purpose of urging the children to self-activity, without which all instruction remains fruitless. These non-essential steps are: Preparation, Aim, and Synthesis."[2]

Its Range.—The Munich Method ranges over the whole school life of the child from the elementary school to the high school. The five volumes of Father Baierl give in detail its application to the needs of the advanced classes in Christian doctrine. The revision and re-editing of the various Catechisms in accordance with its principles are sufficient evidence of its applicability to the needs of children in the middle classes. It appeals to children who are learning for the first time the doctrines of faith.

Results of the Munich Method.—What are the fruits of this reform? They may be summarised in the briefest form. Since that memorable meeting in 1904 of the practical Catechists of Southern Germany to discuss the situation, an added interest has been given to the subject.

[1] *The Creed Explained, The Commandments Explained, The Sacraments Explained, Grace and Prayer Explained, The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass,* Rev. Joseph J. Baierl. All are published by the Seminary Press, P.O. Box 1,004, Rochester, N.Y., U.S.A.

[2] *The Creed Explained,* p. xiii of Preface.

Through conference, literature, and text-books, a renaissance has taken place. In discussions and in the Press a questioning spirit has arisen which does not merely content itself with denouncing the evils of the past, but endeavours to open the avenues of improvement to the catechists of the present. We cannot exaggerate the credit that is due to the authors of the Munich Method for the impetus their movement has given to religious education. A cardinal point in this widely felt reform is the emphasis on the need of training and preparation for teachers of religion. We had assumed that anyone could teach religion with little or no preparation. The reform fastened on that fallacy and stressed the necessity of training for catechists.

" Those who have followed the movement have had ample reason to rejoice at the good it has effected. It has led to a searching enquiry into actual conditions; it has been the means of stimulating widespread and vigorous interest in catechetical work; it has induced successful teachers to give publicity to the results attained and the means used to attain them. Not the least benefit that has been derived from it is the general demand for the more thorough training of catechists, priests, and religious as well as lay people."[1]

It Raised the Standard of Catechetics.—The adherents of the method have led the way in recent years in constructive criticism. In this, as in every other part of the educational field, we have wreckers in plenty, but few builders. The Munich Method offers a way in place of the manner of catechising which it attacks. The way it presents is open to all catechists. It is not a narrow uphill grade along which the young teacher is unable to march. Its way is an easy grade, and the going is good for all who are interested in their craft.

The influence of the Herbart-Ziller system has been to raise the educational status of the subject within the school. Taking the main end of catechetical instruction to be the

[1] " The Catechism in History," J. B. Ceulemans, *C.E.R.*, March, 1913, p. 206.

religious formation of the child, then the subordinate aim is to make religious instruction as thorough an educational subject as it can be. Such aims are not antagonistic—in fact, one helps the other. By raising the intellectual status of religious doctrine we enrich the pupil's appreciation of his Faith. We also educate him in a true sense. In exercising his mind on the truths of Faith, we bring the child's natural reason to the highest degree of perfection. For Faith is subjectively and objectively a true and even the highest perfection of natural reason. Supernatural and natural knowledge is exercised by the one human reason, and the power communicated to it by Faith also indirectly benefits its natural activities. Objectively considered, Faith imparts the highest truths.

How does the Munich Method accomplish that aim? It plays the searchlight of psychology on the teaching of religion. Under this light it sees defects and deficiencies. From the religious lesson it switches the light on the other lessons of the school. That light reveals many things which were absent in the religious period. By a judicious selection of principles and practices the defects of the religious lesson are remedied. The approved method in use in secular subjects is applied to the teaching of religion. Why exclude catechetics from such advantages as it is admitted to possess?

"Practical test is the best proof of success. I have received commendatory letters from all parts of the U.S.A. The widespread use of the method through my publications, here and abroad, shows that the method makes a strong appeal because it simply follows the natural method of learning and teaching. . . . The Munich Method is the natural process."[1]

The best case that can be made for the method may be found in *The Theory and Practice of the Catechism*, already mentioned. An analysis of the method as used in the classroom is there given under the heading, "The Teaching Method" (pp. 186-250). The catechist will find in that

[1] *The Creed Explained*, Joseph J. Baierl, Preface to volume.

careful diagnosis of the steps of the method, what he has learned to appraise as sound teaching.

Its Influence on the Catechism.—Due to the Munich Method attention has been given to a revision, a re-editing of the Catechism texts according to more accepted laws of pedagogy. Even where the Catechism text has remained unchanged, a new approach to its use has been the effect of the wider use of the method. The Kinkead Baltimore series of Catechisms, Nos. 00, 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, are influenced by the principles of the Munich Method.[1]

Another edition of the Baltimore Catechism, with a list of word meanings before each chapter, is published by P. J. Kenedy, New York. The Deharbe Catechism in its revised editions has been influenced by the Munich Method. "The first Catechism of Deharbe appeared in Lucerne in 1847, and can be traced back directly to the small Catechism of Blessed Peter Canisius. At once it began to gain a great vogue. A few years after its appearance it came to be generally adopted in all the Dioceses of Switzerland. In Germany it gradually supplanted other diocesan Catechisms, until at the present day it comes nearer to be a uniformly adopted manual for German Catholics than any similar Catechism. In the United States it is extensively used today."[2]

The Catechism written by Dr. Butler, often called the Maynooth Catechism, is still very commonly used. A re-editing of it has been done by Rev. M. V. Kelly, O.S.B., and the revision is in accordance with the Munich Method principles. Three texts form *The Complete Catechism Series*, published by D. and J. Sadlier and Co., 13, Notre Dame Street West, Montreal, Canada. The First Communicant's Catechism and the Junior Catechism prepare the way for the revised edition of Dr. Butler's, which is No. 3 of the series.

[1] This series of Catechisms is edited by Rev. Thomas L. Kinkead, author of *An Explanation of the Baltimore Catechism*, and is published by Benziger Brothers, New York.

[2] "The Catechism in History," J. B. Ceulemans, *C.E.R.*, February, 1913, p. 122.

The old North Italian Catechism, a revision of which was adopted by Pius X as the official Catechism of the Province of Rome, consists of three stages or grades. The first contains elementary truths for children of a tender age, the second is the Catechism for pupils preparing for the Sacraments, and the third is destined for the so-called continuation classes, corresponding in amount of matter to the large Deharbe. Pope Pius X in his letter of June 14, 1905, to Cardinal Respighi, Vicar of Rome, adopted this Catechism: "The use of this text will be obligatory for public and private instruction in the Diocese of Rome and in all others of the Roman Province, and we trust that all other dioceses will adopt it and thus have one text, at least for all Italy, which is a universal desire."[1]

The text-books of religion written by Rev. P. C. Yorke, D.D., of San Francisco, are an individual application of the principles of the Munich Method to the teaching of the Catechism. The child is led by story, explanation, and picture to the fuller meaning of the Catechism text, which is then to be memorised.

A Reform, not a Revolution.—Thus the Munich Method instituted a reform which was not a revolution. It did not aim at scrapping everything in use on the ground that it was in use. The Catechism changes place in the order of procedure. A new approach is planned, and consequently when it does come into the classroom it receives a welcome. The class has been prepared to receive it. Anticipation of its coming has canvassed the interest of the class. Memorising is given an honoured place. But it also is postponed in the order of class-procedure. It is now a last and joyful stage. "Moreover the work of memorising the text will no longer cause special difficulty, for in most cases the more capable pupils, at least, will have learned a great part of the answers by heart."[2] The founders of the method knew and lived its spirit. Every educator who devised a way of teaching was imbued with the spirit rather than the technique

[1] Letter quoted in the *C.E.R.*, March, 1913, p. 204.
[2] *The Creed Explained*, Joseph J. Baierl, p. xiv.

of the method. Their successors have in many instances lost the spirit, and have applied the letter, the mechanism, forgetting that spirit which they never grasped. The same thing may be said of many who use the Munich Method. The abuse does not destroy the use. Whoever applies the Munich Method according to the spirit which animated the founders, is using a sound manner of teaching Christian doctrine.

The Munich Method Questioned.

There is nothing final in educational practice. In school we deal with human nature in its most diversified form, young children, and consequently no one method is *the* method. There may be as many good methods as there are good teachers. The Munich Method can point to years of success in the school and to a long line of distinguished adherents in the Press. But a better one may come, and if it does there is no disloyalty in accepting it. There are principles in the method which must remain. To quarrel with them is to quarrel with what is best in teaching. They remain as long as psychology remains as the guide of the teacher. Granting that many aspects of the method are beyond reproach, can we question it? Is it the best available for our purpose? The Munich Method owes its inspiration to Herbart. Our point now is that the Herbartian attitude on school-life may be and is questioned to-day. For our own convenience we tabulate the criticism of the Munich Method under three headings, which we shall deal with in order: (1) The Herbartian Steps; (2) Over-Teaching; (3) "Arbeitsschule."

1. *The Herbartian Steps.*

The Munich Method rests on the Herbartian steps. In the course of the lesson the steps are applied in order: "Preparation, Aim, Presentation, Explanation, Syntheses, Application."[1] Until the stage of Application is reached

[1] *The Creed Explained*, Joseph J. Baierl, Preface, p. xv.

there is little real activity among the pupils. The child is in a state of passive receptivity. He is a vessel into which carefully filtered liquid is poured. While the lesson is being presented, the child cannot claim anything that he receives as self-gained. The food is so well prepared that there is little left for mastication. The child swallows it and digestion normally follows. A person who loses his teeth is put on a diet of minced foods. Mastication is provided for by the mincer. But much of the value of food is lost. The minced diet fills, but it seldom satisfies fully. One longs for the time when he will be free to return to the normal condition of chewing his food. The Herbartian dietician supplies his mental food minced. Does the pupil so fed long for a chance of picking up food for himself which he can chew?

Preparation.—"Just as soon as the child hears something new, its soul becomes active; old images and concepts arise within its consciousness and greet the new ones, make friends with them, as it were, and unite with one another. Consequently the first question in a catechetical instruction will always be: What do the children already know of the new subject-matter to be communicated to them? Accordingly the preparation is always a repetition or review either of the knowledge already possessed by the pupils or of the previous lesson."[1]

The Preparation is better known as "eliciting lessons." Eliciting as practised is not a success. Getting at what you want to teach by a roundabout way is frequently a waste of time. It is a form of mental blind-man's buff. There is much vague questioning which leads to the matter in the teacher's mind and leaves room for guesswork among the pupils. It is like the familiar form of our childhood—"once upon a time, and a very good time it was." Eliciting brings notional assent to the pupil's mind, whereas the real assent may be lacking. That is the danger of mere listening. Were the pupil doing something in this stage, then the teacher has a means of judging whether the child has real or notional

[1] *The Creed Explained*, Joseph J. Baierl, Preface, p. xiii.

assent. When a child does something, he must know that he does not know or know that he knows.

Presentation.—"The method of teaching by objective presentation, as outlined above, is the shortest way to the understanding of the pupils. . . . The Presentation is almost exclusively the work of the catechist. He lectures—the pupils listen or look at the pictures or objects he presents."[1] This may be "the shortest way," but that does not necessarily mean that it is the best for the child. It often pays to go the long way round if experiences are to be gained in the way. We wish to teach the idea of sacrifice to the child. The Munich Method would lead up to the idea by story and explanation. The idea of a sacrifice would be presented by sound teaching, and then the child comes to understand it. But does he feel and live the content of the idea? The education-by-experience or learn-by-doing would strive to ingrain the idea of sacrifice through the child's personal experience, rather than a reasoned exposition of the term. The child's approach is from within outwards. Herbart's method is from outside inwards. By his own experience of what it costs to deny oneself in little things —*e.g.*, eating, play, obedience—the child has it burned into his soul through personal pain that a sacrifice means a giving up of something, and that it grows according to the amount given up. Now comes the sacrifice of Calvary; he feels and lives and experiences what it means. The expression "He emptied Himself" was used by St Paul when he had experienced what it meant to deny oneself. St Paul, the recent convert, though instructed by Christ, could never use that expression, because he had not the rich content of personal sacrifices to draw from. In the Munich way we teach the idea and then urge its application. The other way leads the child to the knowledge through doing it—*i.e.*, through experience. It is not "the shortest way"; it is much slower, and it will mean a reorganisation of the curriculum, but it is going to last longer. "The more we think about any experience the more meanings will probably

[1] *The Creed Explained*, Preface, pp. ix and xv.

come out of it. . . . This is one of the reasons why education is changing so fundamentally nowadays, why we insist on actual experiences, and are no longer content with mere words descriptive of things. Actual experiences build meanings. . . . You cannot live here on this earth without living on, in, through, with, by, and from the race experience. First-hand experience is the best teacher."[1]

Explanation.—"Like a sculptor the catechist chisels out of the story or objective illustration the answer of the Catechism. Whenever the Catechism makes use of expressions difficult of understanding, the catechist will employ easier and more familiar words, and then replace them by the words of the Catechism."[2] Would it not be a better training were the children set to work out this for themselves, even though that work were rough and unfinished? "As far as feasible the child should consciously take each step himself, but the teacher may step in to save from defeat. In such a case he helps best by helping the child to help himself."[3]

Application.—"These truths, however, ought not to remain dead capital, but should become fruitful for the daily life of the children."[4] The pupils are now to exercise their knowledge. They are to express what has been impressed. The listening or passive period has been too long. It could be better used.

Were we to apply the framework of the five steps to the teaching of Christ, what should we find? Christ did not begin His public life by the enunciation of a thesis—"I am the Son of God"—and then proceed to prove it by miracle and prophecy. His plan was to work gradually on the growing intelligence of His hearers, setting their minds on edge with personal problems, and through a skilful manipula-

[1] *Foundations of Method*, W. H. Kilpatrick (Macmillan, N.Y., 1925), pp. 219-221.
[2] *The Creed Explained*, Preface, p. x.
[3] *Foundations of Method*, W. H. Kilpatrick (Macmillan, N.Y., 1925), p. 247.
[4] *The Creed Explained*, p. xi.

tion of prompted questions He led them to a solution of their personal difficulties, each one thinking that he had found the solution for himself. Having reached that stage He left the rest to the Holy Ghost. He did not explain all things to His Apostles, He did not fully explain to them His Divinity, even at the end of His earthly life. "Many more things must you hear, but you are not ready for them now." The chief thing to remember is that Christ the Catechist did not attempt to teach His pupils everything. Not a little was left to the silent, slow working of the Holy Spirit.

Our Lord, again, did not treat Application as a final step. Sometimes He omits it altogether. Many of the parables are left without it. His usual method is to intertwine the Application with the story it runs through. The Herbartian would end a parable by adding on the Application: *e.g.*, Now the lesson is . . . To give a cold explanation first, and then add an application that was intended to move pupils, is not a fruitful way of teaching. It would fail because the mind was not focussed. The "pedagogic moment" had passed earlier in the narrative. Logic seems to say that the Herbartian is methodic and correct, but then it is not on the logical basis alone that man lives and learns.

Herbart is not a Herbartian.—In Herbartian philosophy the importance of the subject-matter could not be over-emphasised. It was the material out of which the teacher was to create the soul in the child. The method of presentation of that matter is to be considered seriously for the same reason. Interest looms large. The Herbartian teacher must dominate the child from the beginning. Herbartian interest is aroused by four stages: (1) Clearness, (2) Association, (3) Systematisation, (4) Methodic Work. But Herbart is not a Herbartian when we speak of the modern attitude to the steps. Herbart, like many another thinker in the history of education, is quite innocent of the domineering attitude adopted by the Herbartians as regards the steps. They made them a steel frame into which every lesson must fit. Furthermore, the steps were imposed on the un-

fortunate students of every old-fashioned training college. In a training college every lesson stood alone. It was a demonstration or practice lesson which was an end in itself. Accordingly, the steps were to be hauled in, no matter how misplaced they might be. On leaving the normal school, the teachers aimed to do likewise with their lesson. The steps are useful in planning a series of lessons on any topic, but it is folly to insist on them in every lesson. "The Herbartian steps are useful for the teacher's preparation, because they are logical. The pupil's mind does not work that way, it zigzags, and therefore in class any one step may come first. Teaching is more flexible. The teacher must be on the alert to take advantage of any sign of vital response that may show itself from any direction. To impose them on a recitation is to impose a logical framework on a mind that cannot fit it."[1] Dewey would reduce the five steps to three. He points out dangers into which the Herbartian practice of Preparation is liable to fall: (1) "It is a mental blind-man's buff, it is tedious, too long." "It is like taking such a long run that you are too tired to jump." (2) "A bald statement of aim is like touching a bell for a new exercise. The aim may be significant to the teacher; it is lost on the pupil." (3) The danger of over-teaching: "The practical problem of the teacher is to preserve the balance between so little showing and telling as not to fail to stimulate reflection and so much as to choke thought." The problem that makes the child start and blink is the best Preparation, because it comes from within: "The shock, the bite of a question, will force the mind to go wherever it is capable of going, better than will the most ingenious pedagogical device, unaccompanied by this mental ardour."[2]

Another American writer of the present day admits that the steps are losing ground in the normal schools: "Do you know that some years ago most normal schools followed the Herbartian steps in their teaching methods? Yes, and do

[1] *How we Think*, J. Dewey (D. C. Heath and Co., N.Y., 1909), p. 241.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 207-208.

you know that they are giving way and largely to teaching through problems? I have noticed something like that. I think the more you notice the more you'll agree."[1]

2. Over-Teaching.

Herbart is the psychological guide to the Munich Method. The Munich Method, like many others which claimed Herbart as a guide, has deserted Herbart for the Herbartians, and pins its faith to the five formal steps. We have endeavoured to show by our analysis of the steps as applied to the teaching of religion, that the method is open to question. Another way, which we consider a better way, is offered to the catechist. Herbart is losing ground. He no longer dominates the normal school. The five steps are being evicted from their special preserve. Teachers are questioning his philosophy, and his method, the natural child of his philosophical principles, is being rejected.

"Curiously enough," says Professor Adams in *Modern Developments in Educational Practice*, "the first result of the spread of self-examination among teachers is a certain doubt about the need for the present amount of teaching. There is an uneasy feeling among the more thoughtful members of our craft that perhaps we are teaching too much. It is beginning to be realised that in schools we are obsessed with the conviction that nothing of itself will come, and we must still be teaching. Even in ordinary life there is a superabundance of what Professor Raleigh calls 'dull explanatory persons,' who never know when to stop their tiresome expounding; and in schools it is only natural that this vice should be rampant. Accordingly, it is a hopeful sign to hear teachers speak favourably of 'wholesome neglect,' though the epigrammatic form suggests the false impression that the antidote to over-teaching is simply the cessation from teaching. What is really wanted is a better manipulation of the incidence of teaching. In particular, the relative activities of teachers and pupils have to be revised. In

[1] *Foundations of Method*, W. H. Kilpatrick, p. 241.

the new teaching it is recognised that the pupil must play a more vigorous part than in the old."[1]

Over-teaching is the inevitable result of Herbart's philosophy. As the soul was the resultant of education, the teacher was in a real sense the maker of the pupil's soul. Everything depends on the teacher. His responsibility is great. The child can do nothing of himself. The teacher does all. The curriculum looms large because the pupil is "determined by what he knows." From that false philosophy was begotten over-teaching. "If we may believe the critics of elementary schools, there is already far too much over-teaching in secular subjects. Their harrowing picture is of children penned up in heavy desks for hours at a time (except for a few moments' delirium in the playground), listening, always listening, to never-ending streams of 'lessons,' expected under dire penalties to maintain an 'attention' that would be impossible even for grown-ups, receiving ceaseless stimuli into already jaded minds. Result: intellectual indigestion and nausea. . . . Also, we must add, even many trained teachers have been trained on undesirable lines, for official educationalists have been Herbartian, and Herbart is, or at any rate his interpreters are, directly responsible for the prevalence of over-teaching."[2]

"*Work in Activity.*"—If the teacher plans everything, the execution is just as efficient as the endless chain that perpetually moves around one of Henry Ford's factories. But the process for the pupil will be just as dead, monotonous, and mechanical as it is for the man who twists a screw all day. It is claimed that John Dewey in *How we Think* has provided an antidote to the over-teaching of Herbart by putting the child in a problem attitude. "Instruction in subject-matter that does not fit into any problem already *stirring* in the student's own experience, or that is not pre-

[1] *Modern Developments in Educational Practice*, John Adams (University of London Press, London, 1924, third impression), p. 147.

[2] *The Givers*, F. H. Drinkwater (Burns Oates and Washbourne, London, 1926), pp. 145 and 146.

sented in such a way as to arouse a problem, is worse than useless for intellectual purposes."[1]

Another writer—the Rev. Dr. Johnson, Professor of Education, Catholic University of America—supports the problem attitude as a better approach to the child than the five steps. "Never before have the implications of the principle of self-activity in learning been better or more widely understood. The passive didactic methods that prevailed so long are rapidly disappearing. Learning by doing is supplanting learning by listening. Even where listening is necessary, everything is being done to make it active listening. No longer are the senses of sight and hearing doing all the work; the whole child, with all his senses and faculties, is being challenged. Subject-matter is being presented as experience to be lived, rather than as formulæ to be memorised. The work of Rosmini, of Froebel, of Montessori, of Shields, of Dewey, is bearing fruit, and dissipating the spell of Herbartianism."[2]

3. *The "Arbeitsschule" Movement.*

The Munich Method is yielding way to a new attitude in the teaching of religion. "Even in Germany, where for so many years the 'strengmethodisch' held sway, a veritable revolution is taking place in the Volksschule. The Herbartian methodology is giving way to a new procedure. They call the new school the 'Arbeitsschule,' not altogether happily, yet it does stand for the child and not the system, the whole child and not merely his head, the child happy at tasks he loves and not the dreary drudge."[3] To Herbart education is a development from without, and therefore the importance of method and teacher. To Froebel education is a development from within, and great, therefore, is the importance of the child's inner growth. Pestalozzi

[1] *How we Think*, John Dewey, p. 199.

[2] G. Johnson, *Thought*, vol. i, No. 4, p. 710: "Progress in Education."

[3] "The Dawn of a Better Day," George Johnson, *C.E.R.*, September, 1926, vol. xxiv, p. 387.

stressed the obligation of teaching by objective or visual teaching. Froebel held that faith by insisting that doing or acting was necessary to secure the realisation of ideas. Dewey affirms that we learn by doing, that knowledge comes from skill, and that by work we recognise worth.

Origin of the Arbeitsschule.—Georg Kerschensteiner, Superintendent of Schools at Munich, gave this movement its name—"Arbeitsschule." He explained his idea first in an oration delivered in Zurich in 1908. He argued that most people work with their hands, therefore why not use manual labour as a means of forming character? In *Begriff der Arbeitsschule*, 1926, sixth edition, he develops the idea more fully: "The more the development of the intellectual faculties is linked to and combined with the development of the physical powers, the better is the organisation of the elementary school, the more fully and surely will also the intellectual faculties develop" (p. 37). To gain the intellectual benefit from work the pupil must think beforehand about what he is to do, and then try and express the idea in creative work, and so by its expression get pleasure. This is the doctrine of Aristotle, that pleasure accompanies the perfection of a task. Kerschensteiner claims that this gets away from the passive state so common "in the bookish school, the school of authority." Only one principle matters and that is that the child does the work himself. Kerschensteiner claims that his experience teaches that children like work, and their love for it grows constantly.

Gaudiz, a professor in the Normal School for Girls at Leipzig, gives his support in *Theorie und Praxis der Freieingeistigen Arbeit* (1921). He claims to have worked out the ideas of self-activity in his school at Leipzig with considerable success. The teacher becomes only a helper in the development of individuality. The pupil's work is to be his own, his personal, his peculiar expression of his inner self.

There is no agreement on method, but all admit that self-activity must be *the* basis of school work. A mere routine doing is not accepted. The aim sought is a conscious and

purposeful doing in which all the powers of the body and mind are directed to the end in view. To summarise the leading ideas in the movement: (1) Children should learn to work of their own initiative, self-actively, and self-reliantly. (2) Children are to seek the solution by following the way pointed out by those who discovered, understood, and explained the subject. They acquire thus a deeper insight. (3) Ideas are clarified by expression in words, more so by expression in action. (4) There is little advance until the teachers catch the spirit of self-activity for pupils.

Applied to the Teaching of Religion.—"Once the teacher has aroused enthusiasm for a moral value and called forth in the pupil a corresponding resolve, then begins the work proper, the self-activity of the pupil, his actual striving to attain that value and make it his own. . . . Weigl and Kantz sum it up by saying: 'From word to speech, from speech to action.'"[1]

Self-activity in the practice of religion has two avenues: (1) Self-activity in the process of acquiring religious knowledge. Children visit churches and write their impressions. The liturgical objects are made the subject of an observation visit which they are to report on. The Mass, Way of the Cross, processions are actions that are emphasised, by drawing, dramatisation, pageantry—in fact, all the arts of expression are harnessed to the chariot of self-activity. (2) Self-activity in putting the acquired knowledge to work in pupils' daily practical life. The Lehrplan gives an ideal for each grade, in a general way, leaving it to the individual teacher to make it definite and applicable to the class he knows. The teacher expresses it in various ways, so that one may appeal to the individual; better still, if the individual formulates an ideal for himself. The Lehrplan asks for a *particular examen* for children. The child questions himself whether he followed his ideal in his duties that day, morning prayer, grace before and after meals, Angelus, charity towards his fellows, kindness at home, bearing crosses,

[1] "Aspects of the Arbeitsschule," C. N. Lischka, *C.E.R.*, January, 1927

acts of the Presence of God, examining whether he thought of his ideal before or after acting, etc. Even small things mean much in character-formation; when connected with a great ideal, all help to deepen and strengthen it. The children keep a record and mark with signs the various lapses. The practice of a *Secret* is also encouraged. A few moments is given to children during the religion period to examine themselves on their *Secret*, which each one selects for himself and keeps it a real secret between himself and God.

The advocates of the "Arbeitsschule" claim that they are reaping the fruits of the method. The child attains more personal contact with God and finds the way to personal prayer. The pupil acquires this by self-activity, the teacher guides and inspires. The teacher may show how to speak to God by spontaneous prayer as a conclusion to the lesson. The child will catch the spirit, and then we can safely leave him to God.

THE YORKE METHOD

Origin.

The Rev. P. C. Yorke, D.D., was a priest in the Archdiocese of San Francisco, California. For many years he was a pastor, and took an active personal share in the conduct of the parochial schools. On those years of ex-experience gained in the classrooms of parochial schools, is based his claim for a hearing. Dissatisfaction with the condition of Christian doctrine in the parochial schools of his time urged him to attempt a reform and sent him into the ranks of text-book writers.

" Any school that does not give to the teaching of religion at least the same care, the same skill, and the same efficiency that it gives to other subjects, is like the fig-tree the Lord cursed, not only because it bears no fruit, but because its very verdure is a snare to the parents that trust it, and a fraud on the Church that maintains it."[1]

Here is implied the cause which prompted him to devise a better method for teaching religion. He faces the problem as a pastor chiefly interested " in the aim that the children under his care are taught religion, and are taught it as well as it should be taught."[2]

The Range of His Method.

He strictly defines the range of his method. " I do not intend to discuss here the teaching of religion in high schools and Universities. High school methods and University methods are entirely different from primary methods."[3] He does not intend to cater for the whole elementary school. He omits Grades VII and VIII, because those children intend passing into a high school of some sort, and " the character of the instruction to be given them in religion, as in other

[1] *Teaching of Religion*, P. C. Yorke (Text-Book Publishing Co., San Francisco, 1918), pp. 5-6.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 6.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

subjects, should be conformed to the changing capabilities of the adolescent mind. Hence, it will make for clearness if I circumscribe the object of this paper still more closely, and confine it to the teaching of religion in the elementary grades, or, as we used to say in old times, to the preparation of the children for the Sacraments."[1]

Causes of Growth.

Besides his experience as a zealous catechist in the parochial schools, Dr. Yorke took an active part in the discussions at the annual conventions of the Catholic Educational Association of America. He contributed several papers, all dealing with the teaching of religion. Those papers and discussions created an interest in his reforms. His address usually provoked discussion, and naturally the participants were keen on learning what he proposed as remedies for the defects he outlined in his papers. The *Text-books of Religion*, which he wrote, were the chief means for advocating his ideas of a reform in the method of teaching religion.

In 1915 a Superintendent of Schools was appointed in the Archdiocese of San Francisco. The first appointment was given to the Rev. Ralph Hunt, at the time an assistant to Dr. Yorke, then pastor of St Peter's Church. It was generally rumoured that "Dr. Yorke was the Superintendent of Schools and Fr. Hunt the pastor of St Peter's."

A Scholastic Council, composed of representatives from all the communities engaged in the work of teaching in the schools, was formed, and, in conjunction with the Superintendent, and Dr. Yorke as the power behind the scenes, published in 1922 the *Course of Study*, which is obligatory on all elementary schools. Archbishop Hanna writes a preface and defines the aim of the Council's work. "We committed to the Scholastic Council the duty of organising, grading, enriching, and otherwise completing religious instruction on the basis of the Baltimore Catechism, to suit the age and capacities, the needs and opportunities of our

[1] *Teaching of Religion* (1918), p. 8.

children."[1] The Scholastic Council reports that it fulfils that duty by strongly recommending the *Text-books of Religion and Liturgy*, by Dr. Yorke, (1) " because they are best adapted to the requirements of the course, the subject-matter for which they cover in all essentials; (2) because they have proved their worth by many years of valuable service rendered in the cause of religious instruction, not only in the Archdiocese of San Francisco, but in the dioceses of the country at large."[2] The adoption of his text-books by the Scholastic Council in San Francisco was the main cause of the growth of the Yorke Method. To-day it is in universal use in California, but has not much influence save on the western coast.

The Text-books of Religion.

This title embodies the series of text-books which Dr. Yorke wrote for the children of the parochial schools. They are as follows:

Text-books of Religion—five books for Grades I to V. Additional texts are: *The Children's Mass*, and *The Mass*, a manual for teachers. *The Course of Study*, published in 1922 by the Scholastic Council of San Francisco Archdiocese, may be looked upon as the detailed application of the Yorke Method to the various grades in the parochial school.

Dr. Yorke delivered an address at the annual convention of the Catholic Educational Association at San Francisco on July 23, 1918, on *Teaching of Religion*. This and similar addresses delivered before the same body of educators are the sources from which we draw in this attempt to state the principles which guided him in formulating his method of teaching religion.

The Yorke Method.

Dr. Yorke proposes three questions. Answering them himself, he expounds the principles on which his method rests:

[1] *The Course of Studies*, 1922 (Text-Book Publishing Co., San Francisco), Preface, p. iv.

[2] *Op. cit.*, Preface, pp. v and vi.

1. What must we teach the children ?
2. How should we teach it to them ?
3. What are the chief aids or instruments at our disposal in teaching ?

1. *What Must we Teach the Children from Grade I to Grade VI ?*

He answers that question by asking another: What does the Church wish us to impart to the children at this stage of their curriculum ? The answer is contained in the Catechism, which represents what the average child is supposed to know.

Comment.—Dr. Yorke approaches his problem in the manner which has become the accepted one since the religious revolt of the sixteenth century. He begins with the subject-matter. As a theologian he looks over the field, and asks himself, " How much can I give the children of these grades ?" The Church's Manual is the Catechism, and that, therefore, becomes the centre of attention. Dr. Yorke claims that this beginning is in accordance with the traditional method of the Church. It is necessary to make a distinction here. Until the Middle Ages catechising and preaching went together. The people were instructed during Mass. The instruction was akin to the practical talk which the pastor delivers on Sundays to his people. The instruction is blended with the appeal. No pastor gives an instruction without a practical aim. He does not leave that for the end, but weaves it through the talk. Since Luther's systematising of the Catechism as the method of teaching religion, the emphasis has rested on the subject-matter. The informational and instructional aims predominated to the exclusion of the elements of appeal and persuasion. To offset the religious revolt, theologians went to their books and set themselves the problem—how can we make theology concise and complete for the use of children ?

There is a widespread feeling among educators today that this approach is unpsychological. Begin with the child, make him the centre, and then all things educational shall

be added unto you. In formulating a programme, the child is to be the centre. If the subject-matter be made the centre, then the communication of knowledge may assume the right of being considered the end in view. The teacher will then be judged by his ability in instructing children in the truths of faith. The instruction, the communication of Christian doctrine, is of grave importance to the catechist, for everyone knows that ignorance of doctrinal facts is fatal. But of what use is all the Religious Knowledge in the world without virtue? Virtue is something better and higher than knowledge, something more necessary to the children. Knowledge is but the means, virtue is the end. Knowledge is but the blossom, virtue is the fruit. Knowledge brings responsibility, but virtue establishes a claim to the Kingdom of God. Had the child but memory and understanding, instruction would have been enough. But the child has a heart, conscience, and will. He possesses a soul destined for two momentous futures: an earthly one, and an eternal one. The true business of the catechist is to mould and form the child, to elevate and perfect its moral nature, to awaken, rectify, and purify the conscience, to strengthen the natural infirmity of its will by inspiring him with a dread of everything that is evil, and with a love for everything that is good. Mgr. Dupanloup well said: "It is not to teach Christianity to our children, it is to educate them in Christianity." The Rev. John Wynne, S.J., in *To the Heart of the Child*, expresses the same idea succinctly: "We want to reach the heart of a child, we want to teach that child in a way the child would love as well as learn all about God, Religion, the Church, the Sacraments and Commandments, every one of them difficult to explain even to a grown-up, and tenfold more difficult to explain to a child."

Our Catechism texts are faulty because they were written by theologians whose chief interest lay in the matter to be taught. Pestalozzi is the prophet of the new order. The child is the centre sums up his philosophy of education which supports his "psychological beginnings of education." The

matter will be properly selected when we know the child. To know the child means to cultivate his interests, to teach him through his own mind. Suit the learner with the subject-matter rather than consider the claims of the subject-matter first.

The Munich Method begins in similar fashion. The approach to the child is from without, through the subject-matter. Under the guidance of Herbart the educator seeks to make the matter as palatable as possible. We suggest that a more enduring appetite will be created if we start from within—that is, from the natural hunger of every child for the "good tidings of great joy." The Shields Method begins with the child. The first question Dr. Shields asks is: What are the instincts that predominate in childhood? His method is an attempt to satisfy them fully during "the flowering epoch." The concentric cycles of *The Sower Scheme* aim at seizing "the pedagogic moment, when native interests are most acutely present."[1]

2. *How Should we Teach Christian Doctrine?*

In answer to the first question, What must we teach? Dr. Yorke said the Catechism is the chief text. Having settled the *what*, he now asks *how* it is to be taught.

Dr. Yorke has no claims to be regarded as a philosopher who is to produce a new method. He was a pastor in the Archdiocese of San Francisco who earned the reputation of being a devoted and successful catechist in his parochial schools. Practical experience is the chief argument in his brief. "The method employed in the *Text-books of Religion* is the fruit of now over fourteen years' experience."[2] His attitude to method is conservative and careful. He avoids any innovation or change from "the traditional manner of teaching religion." "In season and out of season let us hearten ourselves to self-confidence and loyalty to our traditions. I know the temptation is almost irresistible to follow in the line of what are called modern improvements.

[1] William James in *Talks to Teachers*.

[2] The Preface to each of the five text-books.

Let us remember that it is a temptation, and our greatest danger is from the seepage of secularism. Far be it from me to advocate obscurantism or to turn away from the light, but let us be sure that it is the light, and not the deceptive glimmer of the false dawn. Our children have a right to the best, but what is newest is seldom best. Our schools should be open to every inspiration of the free spirit, but then they must be as rock-built towers, secure on adamantine foundations, standing foursquare to every breeze, and not slight and rudderless skiffs that every wind of doctrine tosses to and fro."[1]

The Catechesis.—Oral instruction is the traditional method of the Church, and therefore is selected. "The Church has her own method. It would indeed be strange if an organisation sent out by divine authority to make disciples of all the nations had not developed a system of teaching in her long history. That system is known as the Catechesis. Like so many other things, it was taken over from the synagogue and brought to a high pitch of efficiency in the catechumenate. It survived all the disasters of the downfall of civilisation. Though, since the invention of printing, it has suffered a comparative decline, the ecclesiastical authorities have never ceased urging it as the proper method of instruction in Christian doctrine."[2]

Again, "The word 'Catechesis' comes from the Greek, and meant originally to teach orally or by word of mouth. Essentially it consists of three elements: oral instruction, questions put by the teacher, and questions put by the pupil. There is a perfect example of Catechesis in the finding of our Lord in the Temple. St Luke tells us that He was sitting in the midst of the teachers hearing them and asking them questions, and that all were astonished at His wisdom and His answers. Here you have three elements: first, the exposition by the teachers; second, the answers by the pupil; and, third, the pupil's questions put to the teachers. . . . Oral teaching is the very soul of the Catechesis."[3]

[1] *The Family, the State, and the School* (Text-Book Publishing Co., San Francisco, 1912), p. 61.

[2] *Teaching of Religion* (1918), pp. 21-22. [3] *Ibid.*, pp. 21-23.

Comment.—The importance of the oral instruction needs no further assurance than the words of St Paul: "Faith comes by hearing."[1] It is the stage of explanation. It is of the essence of catechetics. We shall not discuss now the many ways it may be done.

3. *Instruments of Teaching.*

In answer to the questions: What are we to teach? and How are we to teach it? Dr. Yorke follows the common practice, teach the Catechism through the catechetical method. He saw the defects in the actual teaching of religion in the parochial schools. In offering a remedy he makes his sole contribution to catechetics. In the operating-room of education there are the amputating type of reformers. Nothing less than a clean cut through satisfies them. They do not wait to see if the limb has any hope of being saved through the few sound spots that live in the midst of disease. Their eyes are on the decaying parts, and down comes the knife. The careful man moves slower. He fastens on the diseased parts and applies his science to their treatment, relying always on the sound spots as allies, whose service he presses into use. So did Dr. Yorke on the patient named catechetics. He saw why it was ill. He proposed an ideal condition towards which he was to strive. He brought his instruments and medicine into the schools and made known to all, through the *Text-books of Religion*, that this is how I am going to bring it back to perfect health.

Looking around for a series of text-books and finding none that pleased him, Dr. Yorke launched out into the uncharted sea of religion texts. The Baltimore Catechism remains the skeleton of his method. The texts are to put flesh on these bones, breathe life into that form, create a spirit that will live and move and have its being in the classroom. The texts are subsidiary, explanatory, preparatory to the Catechism. In the Shields Scheme the reader takes sole possession of the classroom, and like a cuckoo evicts the Catechism from its lawful nest.

[1] Rom. x 17.

Dr. Yorke contemplated a five-year graded course—*i.e.*, from Grade I to Grade V, using the Baltimore Catechism as the main instrument of teaching, but not following its order. In his series of texts, he selects for each grade questions and answers which are carefully chosen to suit the capacity of the child. Sometimes, the wording of the Catechism is changed in the early grades, but, in general, the substance and its presentation are retained. "The aim of the *Text-books of Religion* is twofold: first, to provide the common material for religious instruction; second, to present that material in a graduated form. The *Text-books* presuppose no particular method of teaching. They merely supply the working tools which all teachers must use. Prayers, Hymns, Catechism, Doctrinal Formulæ and Explanation, Holy Scripture, Church History, the Lives and Examples of the Saints, the Divine Liturgy and Sacred Art, Pious Exercises, Popular Devotions, and the like, are the historical means by which the Catholic Religion has been inculcated. The proportions in which these elements have been combined and accentuated have differed according to the necessities of the times, the changes in taste, the skill of the teacher, and the opportunity of the individual. But they have been in every century and must be in every system the great staples of spiritual nourishment by which the soul grows into the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ. The necessity of grading religious instruction is evident to every teacher. The method employed in the *Text-books of Religion* is the fruit of now over fourteen years' experience."[1]

The Catechism is the Core.—The Catechism is the core around which all the other parts of the subject circle. The teacher's preparation, Bible-history, pictures, extra reading—in fact, every art of teaching is to be commissioned to do it service—all are to act as handmaids to this mistress of Christian doctrine in the elementary school. The Catechism has that honoured place because (1) it contains the necessary truths of faith; (2) because it bears the seal of the Church's authority; (3) because it can be used by parents as well as teachers.

[1] Preface to each of the five text-books.

The Baltimore Catechism must remain. How has it been taught in the schools? It has been cut up into sections which are administered to the grades beginning with Chapters I to IV for Grade I, Chapters V to XII for Grade II and so on. When the text is finished it is done again, and so "The children tunnel their way to light and freedom."

Dr. Yorke objects to this lack of proper grading due to a close following of a badly organised text. His reasons are: (1) "There are truths at the end of the Catechism that children even in the First Grade should know." (2) "The late legislation on the communion of children has worked a revolution in the matter to be presented even to the youngest child. From the very beginning the Eucharist and Penance enter into the programme."[1] (3) Some of the answers in the early chapters of the Baltimore Catechism are beyond the power of articulation, not to speak of the comprehension of children of Grades I and II. Dr. Yorke reorganises the content of the Baltimore Catechism in his *Text-books of Religion*, and thus a graded five-year course in Christian doctrine is provided. "The whole Baltimore Catechism could be covered in these five years by assigning two new questions a week, thus giving plenty of opportunity for an extended catechesis even in crowded classrooms, and above all, providing for that steady repetition of old and fundamental matter which is the very essence of successful teaching in this, as in all other subjects."[2]

Dr. Yorke was dissatisfied with the appearance of the Catechism text. It suffered badly when compared with the other texts. "The Catholic people give generously to the support of the school, not because their children cannot get secular education elsewhere, but because nowhere else can they obtain a religious education. In the face of this generosity we sometimes hang our heads when we find pastor and teachers carried away by an unholy emulation and stressing the secular subjects to the neglect of religion. Pious and zealous men erect palatial school houses, but when it comes to the teaching of religion the children must be

[1] *Teaching of Religion*, p. 38. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 39.

content with the penny Catechism, because other religious text-books would cost a little more. The end for which the school was built was to teach religion, and religion is the only cheap thing about the school. It is certainly the wisdom of putting a gold case on an Ingersoll watch."[1] Dr. Yorke wrote text-books to remedy the defects of an ungraded text, and to give the child a more beautiful book than the ordinary Catechism. The texts contain the Catechism in its question-and-answer form, but the child approaches the doctrinal lesson through picture, story, and poem. Each text-book is well brought out, in a large bold type, generously sprinkled with illustrations, and in its general get-up makes a strong appeal to the child.

MEMORY WORK.

Grades I and II, Grades III and IV, Grades V and VI, are grouped so that the course is repeated with greater accuracy the second year. The Catechism presented for Grade III[2] is again prescribed for Grade IV, but greater accuracy is expected from Grade IV. There is no departure from standard methods of sound teaching, which emphasise the necessity of repetition and of preparation before memorising. The memorising is prepared for through Bible narrative, explanation, picture, and poems. Children from Grades I to VI are to memorise the Catechism. The *Course of Study* prescribes memorising as fundamental. " In order to make permanent the knowledge acquired, the formulæ of the Catechism should be committed to memory. This point needs all the more emphasis in view of the prevailing tendency to slight the importance of 'memory work,' a tendency which is justified neither by the principles of psychology nor the results of experience. The course requires that the entire Catechism be thoroughly memorised by the end of the Sixth Grade."[3] Dr. Yorke asks the question, " Should we require the children to memorise the answers word for word?" and answers in no mistaken

[1] *The Parish School and the Catholic Parish* (1923), p. 54.
[2] Lessons 1-33. [3] Introductory, p. 4.

tones, "In this connection I would impress upon you the necessity of accuracy in memorising the prayers, the various formulæ, and the dogmatic definitions."[1]

His argument for memory is that the child is incapable of little else. "I take it that the religious studies in the lowest grades are of the simplest description. They consist mainly in memorising the prayers, and in the acquisition of the formulæ which contain the essential truths of religion. What, after all, are the chief mental assets the little ones have in coming to us at this period of their lives? They are, as you know, the memory and the imagination. Therefore, our main object must be to use the memory and to inform the imagination."[2] Another reason for the fullest use for memory in religion suggests itself to him. "The method of the catechesis, then, is the method of authority. These truths, of course, require amplification and illustration, but they do not need argument. In fact, children of these grades are incapable of ratiocination on such subjects. The time will come when their reason will function, and function acutely, and then the method of the catechesis must change; but at this stage of our children's education our model is our Lord, who spoke not as Scribe and Pharisee, but as one having authority."[3] As a remedy against parrot-recitation of sounds, Dr. Yorke suggests that "(1) we must teach the form correctly in the beginning, and (2) that we must frequently test the accuracy of children's memory by means of writing."[4]

Comment.—The Yorke Method is a way of teaching the Catechism. It is one way. We are grateful to Dr. Yorke for having pointed out that way, and we feel that he would be equally grateful to us, did we meet some obstacles on the way and point them out to him. There is no one way that leads to perfection in the teaching of religion.

Beginning with Catechism.—Our criticism of the Yorke Method is the outcome of our own experience. Other teachers may have been more fortunate, and they have every

[1] *Teaching of Religion*, p. 35.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 25, 39.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 24.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 36.

right to differ from our views. We consider it a mistake to begin with the Catechism in Grade I. Children are not ready for it, and no matter how thorough the explanation, it is not palatable food for the child at this stage. Could we rely on the home doing its share, we might be justified in introducing the Catechism towards the end of the first year at school. If the child is fortunate in having a mother that speaks about God, and who fills the child mind with stories of Heaven and the angels, as only a mother can, then the child comes to school with the foundations well laid. But we must face the facts; and, knowing them, we cannot assume that happy condition as the normal one for the Catholic homes of to-day. The child comes to school with a few prayers as his religious equipment, and with a mind practically unprepared by home training.

First-Grade Text.—In the *First-Grade Text* there are three lessons which prepare the way for the memorising of the page of Catechism beginning with "Who made the world?" and ending with the tenth question: "Is the Holy Ghost God?" The preparatory lessons are a series of simple statements. Lesson I begins: "There is only one God. There are Three Persons in God. The Father is the First Person." That is necessary if we are to lead the child to the Catechism form of lesson. We question the wisdom of that plan. The child will repeat the phrases, and eventually learn the answers on the Catechism page. We concede that he has some idea of what they mean through the explanatory lessons. The plan is a great advance on the method that sets the Catechism as a memory task without preparation, in the hope that the child will benefit in later years when he understands it. We have introduced a simplified Catechism into our infant schools (*First Communicants' Catechism*, by Rev. W. R. Kelly of Toronto), and, on the advice of our teachers, we have discontinued using any Catechism text in the beginning years. The teacher of the First Grade stands *in loco parentis*: she will be wise to copy the mother's way with her children of that age. No mother uses a Catechism text with her child of six. She uses pictures and stories, and, above all,

she talks to her child about God, answering her baby questions. The *First-Grade Text* has as its frontispiece the picture of our Lord and the children. They are seated on His knees, they are climbing over Him, one brings Him flowers, another holds up a gift, a little lad lies at His feet. That picture is the best text. We have seen admirable work done in the First Grade by teachers whose only text was a number of pictures, which the children looked at and talked about. The children made their own picture-books, sketch-books, and that happy activity made the pictures of greater charm and instructional value to them. Beginning in First Grade with any Catechism text, no matter how introduced, seems to us to enter into matter for which the child is not ready.

Too Much Catechism Memorised.—"The course requires that the entire Catechism be thoroughly memorised by the end of the Sixth Grade."[1] Our experience leads us to question this estimate. The Baltimore Catechism differs in few respects from Dr. Butler's or the Maynooth Catechism, on which is modelled our Australian Catechism. For some years we presented the whole text to be memorised, apportioning parts to each grade. The children did it: in fact, we can scarcely recall any inaccuracy in their work. But when we came to the meaning of the words memorised, we began to doubt the wisdom of the practice. Our Catechism has many lessons that could be done sufficiently well by a teacher's explanation. The temptation is to treat each chapter as of equal importance. It does not follow that because the Catechism is sliced into sections each chapter has equal footing as matter to be taught. By no means: there are peaks on the mountain ranges of the knowledge of God which command our chief attention, and around these peaks the other lessons will cluster. What are those peaks? Let the child lead us. What we are to select as the chief things will be decided by what the child needs here and now, not what will be useful to him when he grows up. In our Catechism we have chapters on Prayer, the Hail Mary, and the Lord's Prayer, to mention only a few, which are better

[1] *Course of Study*, p. 4.

done by omitting the memorising and concentrating on the teacher's talk to the class. "What is prayer? Prayer is an elevation of the soul to God, to adore Him, to praise His Holy Name, to return Him thanks and to beg for all graces necessary for soul and body." The memorising of this takes time, and the hearing of it wastes time in class. How much simpler will the teacher explain that prayer is speaking to God and at the same time instil a love of it in the heart of the child? Our programme provides for a division of labour in the teaching of the Catechism. Some parts are to be memorised, other parts are to be taught, but not to be memorised. In that way the whole Catechism is covered, but not all of it in the same intensive degree. Dr. Yorke realised that the Baltimore Catechism had many things in it that could be omitted. "Indeed, I believe that it would be a good thing for education if the Archbishops would reconstitute the committee they formed some years ago for the revision of the Baltimore Catechism. That book could easily be cut in half to the great advantage of teacher and pupil alike."[1] If that be true, what advantage is gained by memorising the text completely? By lessening the course of memory work in the Catechism, we have secured a very considerable improvement in the teaching of the whole text, not merely the preparation of the chapters to be memorised, but also the general grasp of the parts where memory work is omitted.

Use of Technical Terms.—"Is it not precisely to be taught such things, and why should we take for granted the necessity of instruction in the technical terms of profane learning, and draw the line at instruction in the technical terms of religion?"[2] The argument is plausible, and is in keeping with the plea of putting Christian doctrine at least on a level with the secular subjects of the school. But a glance at the texts and methods in use in the elementary grades will show how completely the technical term has been evicted from its former stronghold. Take the subject

[1] *C.E.A.B.*, vol. v, 1908, p. 225.
[2] *Teaching of Religion*, p. 50.

of grammar. Most of us can remember the words which we found difficult to articulate and never really understood. They are not used now. On that score the Catechism text has not kept pace with the times. Some editions of late have endeavoured to explain the technical words by adding other simpler ones or phrases—*e.g.*, " The Nativity or Birth of our Lord," " The Assumption or Taking up into Heaven," " In the sepulchre or grave." The child catches the meaning in this manner of presentation. But there are limits to this, as to every method of making the child familiar with difficult words, and the difficulty becomes the greater in the teaching of religious truths, because they involve the supernatural. The technical terms in our Catechism are more commonly found in the definitions. Let definitions be largely replaced in the early stages by compact descriptions. In that way we can minimise the necessity of using technical words. We do not plead for the abolition of technical terms from the teaching of religion. Religion is the science of God, and as such we must treat it scientifically. But we do not teach the children in the grades the science of philology, even though we give some time to the derivation, meaning, and use of words. Dr. Yorke reminds us that " Parents and guardians, and all in charge of children, are bound to teach Catechism either personally or by others, and an authoritative elementary manual containing the things to be taught and cast in the form of question and answer will always be of use and necessity."[1] For some years past we have given much time, observation, and study to this important phase of the teaching of religion. In a diocese where parishes are whole counties, the home is the only means of teaching religion. There are corners of these parishes where the pastor, no matter how zealous and active he may be, cannot visit easily. To meet the situation we organised correspondence classes in religion. It has helped, but the real and lasting solution is through the parents. Can the parents do this successfully? Yes, provided we place in their hands a suitable text. It is our opinion, from personal observation

[1] *Teaching of Religion*, p. 30.

of home life in country and town, that the chief obstacle to the fulfilment of that parental duty is our Catechism text. And why ? Because of the number of technical and difficult words. The parents cannot understand them, and after a few vain attempts to explain them they neglect the work altogether. Realising the situation in the Bush-homes of Australia, Archbishop Sheehan of Sydney places before him as the ideal for his proposed Catechism, that it will be a text that the isolated mother will love to use and will be able to teach.

In the school and in the home the text with technical terms is not suitable. There is a science of theology, but the elementary school is not the place to begin it. There is a duty to lead children " to know, love, and serve God here on earth and to see and enjoy Him for ever in Heaven." Neither teacher nor parent are helped in the accomplishment of that divine work by insisting on the need of learning technical terms such as " Original sin is the sin we inherit from our first parents and in which we were conceived and born children of wrath," or archaic words such as " They began to speak in divers tongues the wonderful works of God " (both extracts from the Catechism prescribed by the Australian Hierarchy).

Excessive Repetition.—Repetition is a *sine-qua-non* condition of sound teaching on any subject. There are two kinds, however. There is the repetition which means the same old thing over and over again. We think the Yorke Method does not guard itself against that. In the *Course of Study*, the matter is so prescribed that the grades are grouped in pairs, and the higher grades do the same work practically in all essentials as the lower ones—*e.g.*, Grade III does the same as Grade IV in Bible History and Catechism, but more accuracy is required in the second going over. Similarly with Grade V and Grade VI. That sameness in repetition can be avoided by setting exercises in Catechism, which demand revision, but provide against the saving kind which kill interest.

The Sower Scheme banishes the Catechism text from

the infant school (five to eight years). No matter how simplified it is made, be its language baby talk, still it is not suitable. That scheme does not expect the whole Catechism to be memorised. It makes a distinction. Only those answers are to be memorised in which the wording is important because accuracy of expression is essential. The other parts of the Catechism are to be taught and learned, but the answers must not be committed to memory. Dr. Yorke differs from *The Sower* Scheme in the place he gives to the Catechism. *The Sower* advocates the best use of it so that there may be time for other things which it considers of equal importance. Dr. Yorke would go much further to make the Catechism mistress of Christian doctrine. Both agree that the "text could easily be cut in half to the great advantage of teacher and pupil alike." Archbishop Sheehan of Sydney writes in the Preliminary Notes on his new Catechism: "The text should not be memorised." The child is expected to grasp the matter sufficiently after a few readings. Dr. Shields differs fundamentally from all. In his method there is no need nor room for a Catechism text, and consequently the question of memorising does not occur. He agrees with Dr. Yorke on the necessity of a more respectable looking text-book for the teaching of religion.

The Use of Bible History.—The essence of the Yorke text-books lies in the correlation of Bible History and Catechism. From the *First-Grade Text* to the *Fifth Grade*, every story, explanation, illustration, and reference, is taken from Bible History. Dr. Yorke explains its place in the scheme. "We must use Bible History for two purposes: (1) to get the facts, to hear the story of the dealings of God unto man. We begin with the infancy of our Lord, then we take up His Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension; afterwards we learn the chief events of His Public Ministry. In like manner we make a study of the main topics of the Old Testament, telling them stories with only the slightest reference to chronology. (2) Our second purpose is to use the Bible History for the illustration of Christian doctrine. Those of you who read the divine office

will remember with what detail and with what ingenuity the Responds and the Lessons of the first nocturn from the Old Testament are made to typify and illustrate the teachings of the Church and even the events of Christian History."[1]

He directs the catechist to Canon Glancey's introduction to Knecht's *Practical Commentary on Holy Scripture* for a fuller treatment of the relation of Bible History to Catechism. It is a means of illustrating the doctrine of the Catechism. "The illustrative light it throws on doctrinal truths makes them more easily intelligible. They become invested with a concrete form, are clothed with flesh and blood, breathe the breath of life, and move like living truths before our eyes. In the Catechism they appear as cold abstracts and mere outlines. Thus Bible History becomes an object lesson in faith, a veritable pictorial Catechism. It is not merely as a story-book it is to be learned. It at once proves and illustrates doctrinal truth. Bible History serves to complete the Catechism . . . it surrounds the doctrines with a halo of interpreting light. Its chief purpose is to impart life and vigour, picturesqueness and comprehensiveness to religious instruction; it elucidates, proves, enforces, and illustrates the truths that go to make up religious instruction. Catechism and Bible History must mutually interpenetrate, for only in this way is a systematic course of religious instruction possible. Catechism and Bible History must go hand in hand, but Catechism must be in the van. Catechism is the guiding principle and Bible History its handmaid. Catechism and Bible History are to be taught in the closest connection."[2]

Bible History, in the Yorke *First-Grade Text*, is represented in a series of simple statements, each on a separate line. "These are three wise men. They lived in the East." From Second Grade onwards Bible History is in story form, suited to the doctrine of which it is the preparation. Dr.

[1] *Teaching of Religion*, pp. 51 and 52.

[2] *A Practical Commentary on Holy Scripture*, F. T. Knecht, D.D. (Herder), St Louis. Preface to English translation by M. F. Glancey, pp. xiv, xv, xvi, and xvii.

Yorke pays little attention to the chronological order of events. In the New Testament stories he follows the life of our Lord in broad outline, dividing it up into the hidden and public part. In telling the stories, Dr. Yorke aims at retaining the words of Scripture as far as possible. He begins in the *Second-Grade Text*, "Now, when Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the days of Herod, the King, behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem. . . ."[1] He advises the teacher in telling the stories of the Bible to the children "to adopt the practice of using the Bible language."[2] He explains the wisdom of learning the stories in the *ipsissima verba* of the Bible: "The children instinctively take to it as if their ears were still used to the voice of God walking in the garden of innocence."[3] It has been our experience that children have no difficulty in remembering the words of Scripture. They learn the parables in the actual words of the New Testament much quicker, and retain them longer than by adopting any paraphrase of them.

Dr. Yorke advances another argument for retaining the actual words of Scripture in teaching the New Testament stories. "This practice is also of the highest value in forming literary style and cultivating literary taste. The historical reason for that statement is that English literature, more than any other literature, is affected by one book, and that a religious book, the Bible. The Bible was done into English at a time the language was forming, and it has left an indelible impress upon the English speech."[4]

Comment.—We think Dr. Yorke looks at Bible History from the correct angle in the elementary school. It is an illustration, explanation, and verification of the doctrine learned. It goes before, and the doctrine is evolved from the story. There is not much advantage in following a strict chronological order in Bible History for children of this age. Our standard texts of Bible History, such as *Schuster* and *Gilmore*, are naturally organised in that form; but we are sure that the authors of these valuable helps never intended

[1] *Second Grade Text*, p. 25.
[2] *Teaching of Religion*, p. 52.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 62.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

that children should closely observe the same order. The keeping of the scriptural phraseology and the reading of the New Testament are features that recommend themselves very strongly to us.

The Munich Method led the way in its emphasis on the story preparation for the doctrinal lesson. Dr. Yorke accepted that lead and endeavoured to give a personal application of the principle in his *Text-books of Religion. The Sower* Scheme does not prescribe any text in Bible History. It would hardly agree with Dr. Yorke in making this subject the handmaid of the Catechism. Frequently the appeal is made to treat Bible History more as history than is customary. With picture, sketch, and map, *The Sower* makes Bible History a subject worth studying for its own sake, apart from its illustrative value. A more constant use of commentaries is sought and every effort made to make the story live again in the child's imagination. However, the scheme would encourage every effort of Bible History, picture and teaching aid, to put flesh on the stiff bones and life in the stark members of the Catechism skeleton. Dr. Shields is very enthusiastic on retaining the words of the scriptural text. On this point he is in complete agreement with Dr. Yorke. The organisation of the Shields books on religion is very different. The story does not lead to a Catechism lesson. In his books there is no doctrine given in catechetical form. A nature story leads to the religious story. The nature story has the kernel which is chewed and spiritualised in the religious story. The lesson is contained in the story. Bible History as presented by Dr. Shields cannot be considered as illustrative of doctrine, it is the doctrine lesson itself.

Liturgy for all Grades.—Liturgy is a distinct study in all grades. Grades I and II are drilled in behaviour in church, the form of Confession, and the manner of receiving Holy Communion. Grades III to VIII have graded lessons on the Mass. The *Course of Study* prescribes: "On all these points the children are to receive careful instruction and opportunities for practice." There is a book for the child,

Hymns and Prayers for the Children's Mass, and another for the teacher, *The Mass*.

Object lessons are recommended. "On Friday afternoon I bring the children into the Church and put them through the Mass, when I explain parts of the Mass. Throughout I intersperse short instructions on the Church, the Altar, the Vestments, and the like. Before Communion and Confirmation I have found it valuable and interesting to the children to take them into the Sacristy and Sanctuary, and show them at close range the Altar and its ornaments."[1]

Comment.—We are in complete agreement. The editor of *The Sower* sums up the case for offering "opportunities for practice" to children preparing for the Sacraments. "*Every* lesson in the practical part of religious instruction ought to be alive with purpose, ought to answer the inevitable 'why' in a way of its own. . . . Blind suggestion, or the pressure of 'atmosphere' is all very well, but if you want it to last, you must have it rationalised—*i.e.*, the child must understand *why* he is expected to do things."[2]

The Teacher's Preparation.—Dr. Yorke makes some very useful suggestions, quarried, no doubt, out of his own experience as a teacher. "Let me insist on the great advantage it will be to a teacher to begin from the very first years of her career to collect her own teaching apparatus and to keep a note-book. By her teaching apparatus I mean a personal and intimate collection of objects which she has found useful and stimulating in working out the method of teaching she has coloured with her own qualities. Pictures, old Christmas cards, advertising specimens, clippings from catalogues, magazines, and newspapers, dolls dressed to show the vestments, postals, crayons, and a score of other things, if kept together in a special box, will be found most useful to illustrate the instruction, to serve as stimuli for expression work, to stir up interest in the class, and to be given as prizes to provoke emulation."[3]

[1] *Teaching of Religion*, p. 73.
[2] *The Givers*, F. H. Drinkwater, p. 137.
[3] *Teaching of Religion*, pp. 40-41.

The busy journalist of to-day must necessarily be a collector of clippings if he hopes to keep fresh and entertaining in his articles. The keen teachers must do the same. One cannot hope to teach anything entirely out of one's head. We live in an age of filing systems, and the successful teacher must devise some plan, the more personal the better, of collecting and cataloguing whatever will help to make his teaching brighter, more telling, and more interesting.

The Note-book Habit.—Dr. Yorke is again useful and practical. "The teacher will find her note-book a most precious record of her mental development and a most helpful adjunct in preparing for her daily task. I know, of course, there are those who will smile at the idea of preparation in connection with the Catechism lesson, but they are not of the seed through which salvation is wrought in Israel. There is no lesson that requires such care, nay, meticulous preparation, as the daily instruction in religion. For myself, being unprepared, I should sooner undertake to address a class of theologians on the Syncatabasis than take half an hour's Catechism in the baby grade. . . . If then you have a note-book with a record of the preparation of the lesson the year before when you were fine and fit, especially if you make it a practice after school to set down the thoughts and illustrations that come to you out of the white heat of teaching, you will have the very best possible aid to overcome the deadness that besets you and the most stimulating of all motives to equal your past performance."[1]

The *Ratio Studiorum* instructed the teacher to prepare the explanation (*prae-lectio*) carefully. In class he should speak *nec tumultuario nec subito sed quae domi cogitate scripsit.* A thorough preparation in writing of the matter to be presented was prescribed by the *Ratio* for all teachers. The note-book habit stores all such laudable preparations. Those who neglect to read and prepare for class belong to what Adams calls "teachers by the grace of God." Dr. Yorke rates the picture lesson very high as an aid to teaching religion. His hints on the use of them are worth quoting.

[1] *Teaching of Religion*, pp. 41-42.

Preparation for a Picture Lesson.—"Let us return to the picture lesson. It is in the preparation of the picture lesson that one sees most clearly the advantages of the note-book. Here again the wise men may elevate their eyebrows and sneer at the foolishness of preparing a picture. Is it not the business of a picture to speak for itself? No attitude could be more superficial. We see in a picture only what we bring to it, and it is the task of the teachers so to furnish the minds of the children that they may recognise according to their capacity the vision the artist saw and bodied forth by cunning brush from glowing palette for the delight and instruction of men.

"For example, let us take the subject so favoured by painters and so loved by little ones—Christ and the children. The teacher in preparing this lesson will naturally have two ends in view—to see the scene as it actually happened, and to make the children see it for themselves. First, then, the teacher turns to the Gospels and finds in St Matthew his account of the incident. At the foot of the page she will notice that the same incident is recorded in St Mark and St Luke. Let her make three parallel columns in her note-book and write in there the three accounts under their respective authors' names. A study of what she has written will show her that while the backbone of the story is identical in the three accounts, each of the Evangelists gives some trait or circumstance that the others omit.

"Now let the teacher go to the community library and take down the *Life of Christ*, by Father Maas, S.J. The four Gospels are woven into one continuous narrative. Moreover, it is furnished with reliable and learned notes. Let the teacher copy into her note-book at the foot of the parallel columns the account of the incident as he blends it from the synoptics. Let her also study the notes carefully and enter a few key words, to remind her of the time, the place, the occasion of the incident, and of the manners and customs of the people. Finally, let her get one or more of the literary Lives of Christ (*Fouard* or *Elliot*) and write into her note-book their description of the scene, incorporating, as they do,

not only the facts, but also the geography, the scenery, the architecture, the popular ways, the historical and personal allusions to make a concrete picture. Then, having done all this, let the teacher make it the matter of her morning meditation for the next week. Little by little the scene will begin to live for her. As when we are trying for the proper focus in projecting a picture, the blurred and indistinct image trembles at first and then begins to take shape and form, and at last stands out in clear and sharp definition, so the confused outlines of the story will begin to co-ordinate themselves, and we shall see the Judean village and the flat-roofed houses glaring white under the brilliant sky. We shall see the narrow street and the loungers in the shade stirred from their lethargy by the approach of the Prophet of Nazareth and His little band. We shall see how our Lord retires into one of the houses, and mark the constant stream of visitors coming and going, and listen to the murmur of the high arguments that have made memorable that humble abode. At last, as the burden of the day is broken and the tempered heat renders tolerable the next stage of their journey, our Lord and His Apostles appear in the village street and make ready to depart. The strain of the day is evident in His lined face and drooping shoulders, and the journey before them is long. The Apostles gather about Him in loving sympathy and cast in their minds how to lighten His way.

" At this very moment the mothers of the village, hearing that the great Rabbi is about to leave them, snatch up their children and run to demand what is their right by immemorial custom, the blessing of the Holy Man for their little ones. We can see the thunder frown on the brows of James and John, we can hear the flying word from the impetuous lips of Peter, we can mark the astonished mothers hurt and indignant at this more than Galilean rudeness. Then we fix our gaze upon our Lord. He turns His eyes flaming with anger upon His Apostles, with bitterness He rebukes His own. He bids them stand aside and make way for the children. He seats Himself. The children run to Him.

They cluster round His knees. They climb into His lap. They hang over His shoulders. He lays His hands upon them and blesses them, and, like the sound of music dropping from the stars, we hear His words: ' Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God.' "[1]

What are the Results?

The Text-books of Religion were published in 1908 by Dr. Yorke. The addresses to the Catholic Educational Association of America which Dr. Yorke occasionally gave from 1908 to 1923 focussed the attention of Catholic educational thought in America upon them. We shall see that Dr. Shields was urged by their appearance in 1908 to write his own, because Dr. Yorke still clung to " the old analytical methods." From 1908 to 1922 the *Text-books of Religion* were on trial in the schools of California. In 1922 the Scholastic Council of San Francisco made them obligatory on all its parochial schools. In the schools of Sacramento and Los Angeles they are the texts in use. In our interviews with the superintendents of schools in the West, we learned that they were perfectly satisfied with the results and that they would not exchange the Yorke Method for the Shields or any other method. Dr. Yorke's influence is limited to California.

[1] *Teaching of Religion*, P. C. Yorke, pp. 42-47.

"THE SOWER" SCHEME

Origin.

The Sower Scheme was first printed as a private suggestion in *The Sower* in 1920. *The Sower* is a journal of Catholic Education, which was edited until 1927 by the Rev. F. H. Drinkwater, a priest in the Archdioceseof Birmingham. Father Drinkwater states of the Scheme that "it is not the production of the present writer, but is the result of the experience and thought of several Catholic teachers."[1]

Cause of Development.

In 1922 *The Sower* Scheme was approved for optional use in the Archdiocese of Birmingham, and it is now in use in most of the schools there. *The Sower* journal has made known its aims to a much wider public than the Archdiocese. *The Sower* publications have found their way into the schools of the English-speaking world. I have seen them in the classrooms of Australasia and America.

Its aim at reform has attracted the attention and enlisted the sympathy of most teachers. That aim is "to change the undue restfulness during the religious hour into various forms of happy activity."[2] It aims at changing passivity into activity.

Another ambition of the scheme which made a favourable impression among teachers is its effort to knit the Church and school more closely together. "Our elementary schools have one great advantage over other kinds of Catholic schools in their closer association with the parish church and the parish priest. Where both parties—priest and school—take full advantage of this association the religious results are very striking. When the school is allowed and

[1] *The Givers*, F. H. Drinkwater (Burns Oates and Washbourne, Ltd., 1926), p. 178.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 147.

encouraged to do things in the church, to be responsible on occasions for the singing of Mass or Benediction, to answer the priest corporately at Mass, to undertake the ordinary service of the altar, to perform a Christmas Mystery Play, and so on, then the religious instruction gets the stimulus and reality which comes to any instruction through constantly having real purposes and real projects to work for. Instruction for the Sacraments is generally done well; precisely because of its very nature it is to end in real action, and the same stimulus can fruitfully be used much more extensively."[1]

THE NEEDS THE SCHEME MEETS.

The purpose of *The Sower* Scheme is to readjust the emphasis of religious instruction, placing it less on the learning of the Catechism text and more on the practical needs of Catholic life. It is mainly a way of dealing with the Catechism so as to reduce the amount of time spent on memorising it, and leave more time for other points of religious training and instruction. Instead of the whole Catechism being learnt by heart, only a limited number of the answers are indicated for this purpose, on account of the importance of their actual wording, and in this way the Catechism is covered in a four years' course from eight to twelve. This makes it possible for the children under twelve to be taught in a manner more suited to their tender years, and for the children over twelve to receive some more advanced instruction corresponding to their growing intelligence. Also there is much more time for all the practical things connected with religion, such as Plain Chant and the use of the Missal.

THE RANGE OF PERSONS IT PROVIDES FOR.

The scheme is adapted for elementary schools—*i.e.*, children from five to fourteen, or secondary schools up to sixteen. The chief difference is that the secondary schools

[1] Report on the Schools of the Diocese of Birmingham, 1925, by Rev. F. H. Drinkwater.

would get in a serious course of Church History. "It will take no account of the difference between elementary and secondary schools, for, as our readers are by this time aware, we hold that, whatever a school may call itself, all teaching after the age of twelve *must* be secondary teaching, otherwise it is useless, and the child would be better away from school altogether."[1]

List of Books.

No text-books for pupils are published for *The Sower* Scheme. It is recommended that pupils in the second period should make their own Catechisms (with holy pictures pasted in) as they go along, and that in the third period the pupils should keep a good note-book. A series of hand-books containing material for teachers' lessons in the scheme is published by Burns Oates and Washbourne, London, and Benziger Bros., New York. One of these hand-books, *Short Instructions on the Mass*, is sometimes given to the children to read. The scheme accepts the English Catechism as the text-book, and endeavours to make the best use of it so as to leave room for other things.

"The Sower" Scheme Hand-books.

A Scheme of Religious Instruction.

Approved for optional use in the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

The Little Ones.

Written for the teacher in the infant school by Mother M. Eaton.

Teaching the Catechism.

Explanation material for the teacher in the middle school, by the Editor of *The Sower*.

Catechism of Christian Doctrine.

The ordinary Catechism printed in a way convenient for *The Sower* Scheme.

[1] *The Givers*, p. 178.

Stories in School.

Teacher's material for children under twelve.

Short Instructions on the Mass.

A series of explanations of the action of the Mass for children under twelve.

Twelve and After.

Teacher's material for religious instruction of older children.

The Givers.

Notes and Essays on Catholic Education, by the Editor of *The Sower*. Includes the pamphlet called "Religion in School," and many other articles and essays which first appeared in *The Sower*.

The Way into the Kingdom.

Some chapters on childhood, with an introduction on teaching methods.

Catechism Theology.

By Dom J. B. MacLaughlin, O.S.B. The central doctrines of the faith explained in everyday language.

The Mind of the Saints.

By C. V. Trent. Some main characteristics of the Saints' lives, illustrated by many examples. Three of the chapters are reprinted from *The Sower*.

All these can be obtained by post from:

1. *The Sower*—a quarterly journal of Catholic Education, 763, Coventry Road, Birmingham.
2. Burns Oates and Washbourne, London.
3. Benziger Bros., Barclay Street, New York.

Note.—Since August, 1927, *The Sower's* Editor in place of the Rev. F. H. Drinkwater has been Mgr. Gonne, St Bede's College, Manchester.

THE PRINCIPLES OF "THE SOWER" SCHEME.

The essential feature of the scheme is to divide school life into three periods: Infant School or Kindergarten (age, five to eight); Juniors or Middle School (age, eight to eleven); Seniors or High School periods (age, twelve and after). The

treatment is concentric. Each of the three periods takes the pupil through the whole teaching of the Church in a more developed way at each stage. In the Infant period everything is taught simply, without any Catechism formulas, and culminates with First Communion. In the Junior period the Catechism text is made the basis of the four years' course, but is not learnt by heart except those answers of which the exact wording is theologically important. In the Third or High School period there is another four years' doctrine course, with all the emphasis on things to be done in Church and in Catholic life.

"Our chief proposal is that religious training in schools should be divided into three main periods or stages, each stage being in its own way a complete survey of Catholicism; this kind of syllabus has been christened 'concentric.' It might be compared to climbing a high tower with three successive lookout posts giving an ever-widening view of the same country; and the comparison would be improved if one supposes a pair of field-glasses at each window—each pair more powerful than the one below. The climber would see the same countryside at each stage, but with greater range and greater meaning, and also with more detail.

". . . The present argument is that each of these stages must have a content appropriate to itself, as well as some variations in method and discipline."[1]

Let us see the content prescribed and the method suggested for each of these three lookouts on the field of Christian doctrine.

The Infant School (Five to Eight Years).

There is no Catechism text in use. There is no room for "theology," no matter how simplified it may seem to be. The argument runs thus: "To take a very practical illustration, the idea of mortal sin is a piece of psychology that is entirely wasted on these small people who are making their first confession. Not only is it wasted on them, it may also do them permanent harm; in a way they will understand

[1] *The Givers*, p. 178.

when you explain mortal sin to them, but they will understand all wrong. By the time (several years later) that they come to understand it rightly, if they ever do, they have long since come to regard 'mortal sin' as a light matter, because they think they have committed mortal sins so often. The error will be corrected, maybe, but under the surface of the mind there will survive for a whole lifetime that early impression that a mortal sin does not matter much after all. Similarly with preparation for Holy Communion let it be deliberately rudimentary—make sure of belief in the fact of the Real Presence, and then keep to devotion; no theological refinements at all."[1]

In the preparation for the Sacraments, the emphasis is on devotion, and little appeal is made to the reasoning of the child. Our experience in the infant school confirms that view. Teachers have gone to much trouble in explaining some extracts from the chapters on the Blessed Eucharist in the Catechism. Phrases like "under the appearances of bread and wine," "to receive worthily," "a lively faith, a firm hope, and an ardent charity" are too difficult and technical for the child of this stage. The time given to their explanation is more profitably spent in exciting the child's devotion to the Real Presence.

The Content.

What would the child see from the first lookout? "The first stage would comprise all the essential points of Catholic life and doctrine, even the Chair of Peter, generally kept back until very much later, but all very rudimentary. As utterly simple as possible, not a one year's course taught over and over again till the elder children are weary, but carefully graded term by term."[2]

There would be stories, prayers, and hymns to be learned. "Perhaps some day there will be religious 'readers.'"[3]

The teacher uses *The Little Ones*, by Mother M. Eaton, as the mine from which she draws the materials of her lessons.

[1] *The Givers*, p. 180. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 179. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 179.

The Method.

"Mainly the method must be play-way—stories, dramatisations, pictures, drawing, and natural conversation; and it goes without saying that actual religious practices in church, and also in school as far as possible, are worth more as education than all the instruction ever given."[1]

In the first stage the aim is to make religion the core around which all else in school, church, and home should cluster. To attain this ideal the scheme outlines no separate period for religious instruction. It should be correlated with everything that is done in the infant school. The Shields Method has a like aim: "Religion should be so intimately interwoven with every truth that is presented to the child as to leave little room for separate formal religious instruction. . . . This close correlation is demanded by the vital unity of the child's mind."[2]

Comment on Infant School.

This might be rechristened the story stage, because stories play such an important part in the infant school. I have tested the scheme in our diocesan schools for some years. It has worked well. The ordinary teacher needs much help in story-telling. Stories form the daily bread of the infant school, and the art of story-telling is a difficult one.

In *Stories in School* the Editor of *The Sower* writes a Preface that is helpful, suggestive, and encouraging; repeatedly he warns us that "children are not to be starved of their stories."

Another *Sower* publication that helps is *The Way into the Kingdom*, especially Chapter V, which considers our problem of religious instruction "as a matter of fitting our methods to the God-given faculty of imagination." The first quality of an elementary teacher is the power to tell a story. If a teacher has not this gift by nature, then her first duty is to cultivate it by a study of the best models,

[1] *The Givers*, p. 179.
[2] *Primary Methods*, T. E. Shields, p. 102.

the chief of which is the Gospel narrative. I have found that the art of the story-teller needs more cultivation by the elementary school teachers. A sense of humour would save the situation at times. I have listened with awe to a child of six narrating that "a multitude of heavenly hosts astonished the frightened shepherds," and that they "were poor in earthly riches, but singularly rich in spiritual gifts." Poor shepherds! Were they to listen to their story as told by some of our children, they would not recognise themselves. In this stage we rely on stories, plenty of them, told in language that is simple, detailed, ample in local colour, and dealing with persons.

In a little book entitled *The Fountain of Life* there is an apt illustration of this point. The teacher was telling the story of our Lord and the Samaritan woman to a class of poor children. She told it as interestingly as a fairy tale. The class hung on her words, but when she finished, one girl, leaning over the desk, breathless, bright-eyed with anxiety, gasped out: "Oh, Sister! did He get the drink in the end?" That was very beautiful, and it is just that spirit we want our children to catch.

Our teachers in the infant school are so reverent that they are too nervous to take any liberties with the Scripture text. The "natural conversation" so rightly emphasised by *The Sower* Scheme is absent. There should be more encouragement given to the children to talk about the event, they should tell the story in their own words. Teachers are too diffident about adding individual touches to the Gospel narrative. Provided one does not alter the facts of the Gospel story, one may paint them in living, vivid, appealing word-pictures.

Because the art of the story-teller is so difficult for most teachers to cultivate, I suggest that *The Sower* Scheme would do better work in this stage were a religious reader used. Having dispensed with the Catechism altogether, and having nothing definite in Bible History, the reader would be an anchor for the teacher and a pilot for the children. A reader well illustrated would steady the teacher against

the danger of over-talking, and would light the path of achievement for the child to march along.

I agree with the big place given to pictures in the scheme. Pictures make plain what words fail to explain. Beautiful pictures are painted prayers. They will hang for life on memory's walls. I have learned to appreciate the wisdom of Aristotle's remark that "nothing young is capable of remaining quiet." Dramatisation, drawing, religious practices in church, are fruitful in results. The great advantages of the school dramatisation and the object lessons in church are that they provide suitable occasions for much casual instruction and incidental teaching, which sticks in the mind, because it is connected with something they are doing. I have found the object lessons on Confession and Holy Communion, conducted in the church, the best channels of instruction.

The Middle School.

In this stage, which ranges from eight to twelve, roughly, the Catechism text is made the basis of the four years' course. This again will be a complete survey of Christian doctrine, using the whole Catechism as a text. The advantage claimed for omitting the Catechism in the infant school is that the pupils come fresh to it now. One of the serious arguments against the Catechism as a text-book is that children began and ended with it. Beginning it in the infant school, they continued to use it in the middle school, and were still going over it in the advanced school with the inevitable result of boredom and nausea. *The Sower* Scheme meets that objection by limiting its use to the middle school and banishing it from the infant and high schools.

Is the Catechism to be learned by heart? "We have no particular objection to the Catechism being learned by heart; the more momentous answers ought certainly to be so learned, and indeed one may say that learning by heart is more appropriate and more welcome to children at this age than at any other. But it is very important that what

is called the 'Synthetic Method' should be followed with the Catechism—*i.e.*, the answers should first be built up in the children's own words, then translated into the phrases of the Catechism, and only *then* committed to memory."[1]

The scheme makes a plea for sound teaching, which demands that memorising should be preceded by thorough preparation, and that learning by heart is a final, never an initial stage.

The scheme is quite definite in its attitude towards the anti-memorising wave that rises in U.S.A. and tends to sweep over the educational world. The Editor of *The Sower* writes in answer to the *Catholic School Journal's* (Milwaukee, U.S.A.) comment on the scheme which banished the Catechism from the infant school. The journal said: "Young children should not be required to memorise Catechism answers; here in America at least two Catechisms have been prepared for children at that stage, which aim at discouraging everything in the way of verbal memorisation." *The Sower* replied: "In that case they are not Catechisms, but reading-books of some kind, to which, of course, we have no objection whatever. But a Catechism is *meant* to be memorised, and if the word means anything at all, a Catechism is a concise statement of doctrine expressed in adequate theological language, however simple. It is this that seems to us to be totally unconnected with the way in which children of First Communion age do actually get to understand things. Leave out all the long words if you like, reduce your doctrine formulas to words of one syllable, if the theologians will let you, and they will *still* be meaningless to the inhabitants of the infant school. Isn't it amazing that people can't see this?"[2]

This is another justification for *The Sower* proposal to withdraw the Catechism from the infant school. "A Catechism is meant to be memorised," but no matter how simplified the language may be, it still remains meaningless

[1] *The Givers*, p. 180.
[2] *The Sower*, January, 1921, p. 115.

in the infant school, and therefore why burden the ground with it?

The scheme retains memory work. It pleads, however, for a rational use of memorising and suggests the "Synthetic Method" as worthy of emulation. If a teacher uses that method, much more time will be needed to get through the amount of memory work she is accustomed to exact in Catechism time. *The Sower* Scheme's strongest point of reform is to make the best use of the Catechism text so as to leave more time for other things. How does it accomplish that aim? The whole Catechism is to be covered in the four years of the middle school, but not all of it is to be indiscriminately set as memory work. A standard is set up which is to regulate the amount of the Catechism to be memorised. "Those answers are to be memorised of which the exact wording is theologically important." Answers are not selected because of the importance of the doctrine. Why? Because it is presumed they could be taught in a better way. Instead of the whole Catechism being learnt by heart, only a limited number of the answers are indicated for that purpose, on account of the importance of their actual wording, and in this way the Catechism is covered in a four years' course. The answers chosen are in the nature of exact definitions, and the Catechism is good on this point because it is the work of able theologians. Then why not accept these definitions and have them memorised by the children? "The difficulty about the memorising of our present Catechism is that it leaves so little time for other things which are much more important. In *The Sower* Scheme, as approved for use in Birmingham, only 108 out of 370 Catechism answers are to be memorised."[1]

Note.—I refer readers to the views on the ideal Catechism which I outline in the chapter headed "The Catechetical Method Examined" (pp. 115-121). The Editor of *The Sower* indicates the characteristics which he considers would make the Ideal Catechism.

[1] *The Givers*, footnote to p. 180.

The Content.

The Catechism forms the staple diet of children in this stage. We might call this period, eight to twelve, the Catechism years. Bible History is always on the menu. Stories are the sweetmeats. The Bible History content grows from the stories of the infant school to simple history, until the high school period, when the history aspect dominates. The method grows accordingly, and more emphasis is gradually placed on the historical background, the local colour, and the historical tools, as maps, pictures, lines of time are brought into requisition. In the middle school " stories must take a wider range, bringing in much Scripture and Church History in story cycles."[1]

A Bible History text-book is not encouraged by the scheme. " Regular readers do not need to be reminded of the views of *The Sower* on the subject of ' Bible Histories.' Nevertheless, if Bible Histories are to be used, it is well to use the best available. The best available is certainly Ecker's *School Bible.*"[2]

The teachers of this period are directed to *Stories in School* for material. A series of articles appeared in *The Sower* summarising six epochs in Church History. They are recommended to the teachers in the last year of this period.

" The learning of prayers and hymns will still have a large place."[3] Father Drinkwater has a very interesting chapter on " Prayer Time " in *The Givers* (Chapter XIV, pp. 186-196). He asks, Why are prayers said in school ? Three answers present themselves: (1) To teach the prayers, (2) to make sure that children do say morning prayers, (3) to pray for God's blessing on the day's work. Discarding the first two as unworthy of attention, he concentrates on the last, and reminds teachers in Catholic schools that " God measures our prayers by their intensity and not by their length." He advocates the learning of the words of prayers as an

[1] *The Givers*, p. 181.
[2] *The Sower*, April, 1927, No. 83, p. 188.
[3] *The Givers*, p. 180.

ordinary school drill, without any kneeling, and so on. "And in this way I think we might very reasonably teach the children a much larger selection of prayers than we actually do. There are dozens of beautiful little prayers, liturgical and otherwise, waiting to be popularised amongst Catholics, that will be found in any school syllabus. Especially make use of prayers after Communion. Small children would be all the richer if they knew some of Father Roche's little prayers, and could not the children (especially the older ones) reasonably make a closer acquaintance with these prayers of the Church *par. excellence*—the Psalms and Canticles?"[1] How few of our people use the three prayers before Communion which the Church commands her priests to say in the Ordinary of the Mass—and yet what preparation for Communion would be more appropriate and helpful?

The Method.

The method is summed up in the simple statement, "The children must do more for themselves now."[2] The doing hand is much encouraged. In a chapter headed "Over-teaching" in *The Givers*, "the various forms of happy activity" are indicated. The argument is that "no amount of didactic instruction can take the place of the activity of 'the growing end of the mind'; and you learn more (whether you are a child or a man) by trying to do a thing yourself than by all the preliminary lessons on how to do it."[3]

Written work, using reference-books, class dramatisation, solving "cases," performing duties in church, are recommended. The chief expression work of this period, however, is the home-made Catechism which every child is to produce. I have outlined in detail how *The Sower* Scheme instructs its children to make their own Catechisms, a volume for each year. I refer the reader to that account (*cf.* the home-made Catechism project, pp. 204-209). Bringing the school in closer

[1] *The Givers*, p. 189. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 181.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 147.

touch with the parish church is the purpose of the duties which the children are directed to perform in church during this stage. "For a culminating point the second stage might very well have the attainment of some practical ambition, such as the serving of Mass for boys, and perhaps for girls the admission into some guild."[1]

Teachers' Aids.

Valuable aids are provided for the teacher in the middle school by the scheme. In an introduction to *The Way into the Kingdom*, the Editor of *The Sower* offers practical suggestions as to the method to be employed during this stage. A special *Sower* edition of the English Catechism emphasises the answers to be memorised, and presents the ordinary Catechism in a way convenient for those who follow *The Sower* Scheme. A teachers' manual is also provided.

Teaching the Catechism, by the Editor of *The Sower*, gives explanation material that is of great service to the teacher. Our teachers are not trained in theology. To give accurate, concise explanations of the doctrines contained in the Catechism answers is a difficult task. To make the explanation just right, to the point, definite, demands exact knowledge of theology and some acquaintance with the child's mind. The Editor of *The Sower* furnishes that in this manual. Other suggestions—*e.g.*, symbols for blackboard use, diagrams and illustrations of doctrine—are invaluable for our hard-working teachers who have not the time to find these things out for themselves. An extra manual of material is given in *Catechism Theology*, by Dom J. B. McLaughlin, O.S.B. The central doctrines of the Faith are explained in the language of the classroom, and presented with a "rare power of illustration."

Short Instructions on the Mass is the only hand-book which may be considered a text. It is admirably done, enabling the child to follow the action of the Mass. We have used this pamphlet to great effect in our diocesan schools.

[1] *The Givers*, p. 181.

Comment.

The Catechism years are very critical ones in the religious formation of the child. The Catechism text has been a stumbling-block rather than an ally to many. When we ask why should this be, we discover the roots of the evil in many false assumptions. The chief of these is the belief that anyone can teach the Catechism without any need of preparation. Another is that the theologians fail to come down to the level of the child mind. Finally, teachers lack the theological background which is essential to accurate explanation of the Catechism answers. These defects can be remedied by preparation. Teachers' aids and popular compendia of theology are within the purchasing power of all to-day.

Frequently the art of teaching is neglected within the religious period. I have watched teachers in secular work with a keen appreciation of their craftsmanship. I have observed the same teachers in the religious period, and the contrast was striking. One would think that they had dropped their art before the lesson began. One stick of chalk is worth a bushel of words. Catechism is a very difficult subject to teach well, and he who would achieve success must employ all the "tricks of the trade."

The Catechism has a bad reputation with the children. It stands for uninteresting drudgery. Why? Because there is too much stress in memory work, and the teaching seldom rises above the level of hearing lessons. Now, setting lessons and hearing them is not considered teaching in other subjects. It cannot be asked to masquerade as teaching in Christian doctrine. Teaching consists in the preparation and presentation of matter to be learned. It is a co-operative work of teacher and class. Hammering in the Catechism is not successful because, having nothing to grip, it falls out like nails driven into soft mortar. The temptation to use the cut-and-dry formulas of the Catechism is a proximate occasion for many teachers, and one that can be made remote by a constant use of the teacher's art within the religious period.

I consider *The Sower* Scheme is a valuable contribution to catechetics on this point. The teacher of Catechism is guided by the headlights of sound pedagogy, simply presented in *The Sower* hand-books for this period. The thin places in the theology of the unordained catechist are thickened and strengthened by the valuable supply of explanation material put in his hands. The attitude to memorising is sound and very welcome at the moment when memory work is looked upon as the eighth deadly sin, pardon for which is denied here and hereafter. The stress on explanation preceding memory never grows stale in catechetics. I am in complete accord with the Editor of *The Sower* in his Preface to *Teaching the Catechism*: "Memorising should not be the first step but the last step or finishing touch to a process of explanation and understanding."

The Sower's first principle—"To have the right use of the Catechism, so that it may provide the necessary intellectual stiffening without turning religion into mere words and occupying all the available time with them"—is very sound. We have followed it in our diocesan schools. A distinction has been made in our treatment of the Catechism text. Our pupils go through the whole text in the four years; they know it, but they do not know it all by heart.

I have set the task of making their own Catechisms to the children of this stage, and the results have been satisfying. The chief obstacle to the universal acceptance of the idea in our diocesan schools was the fear that the children were spending too much time at it. Unfortunately, there are teachers still living who consider all a waste unless they are talking and the class hanging on their words in "the mental state of pure receptivity in which one sits before a cinema." Discovering that the children learned the Catechism better in this interesting play-way than in the old way, all opposition vanished and home-made Catechisms became the ambition of all. I differ from the scheme in the Bible History text. I have tried both in our schools and found that better work was done when some text was in use. The

children read it at home. For some it became a "pet" story-book.

The Vocational Aim.

Character formation through religious practices is carefully considered by the scheme during this stage as well as the final one. "With regard to discipline, the thing to be aimed at here is the fulfilment of religious duties by any reasonable means of encouragement and stimulus, but we must carefully refrain from anything which would antagonise the children or disgust their minds with religion or its representatives."[1]

The Way into the Kingdom maps out the road of achievement in this important aspect of the religious formation of children. In an inspiring chapter on "The Idea of being Something" (Chapter VII) the author writes: "The scout movement is the most perfect example of the Vocation Idea. It gives a character-training through joy, service, and practical activity. The scout is expected to perform irksome and disagreeable duties. The ideal aimed at helps him through them, and he brings a joyous spirit with him as he works."[2] We want this in religious formation—a joy in the work. Joy is to mind and heart pretty much what oxygen is to the lungs and blood.

Again, the author writes: "The Vocation Idea is also strong in games clubs. Membership of a club is looked upon as a vocation. Normally that goes with the school spirit. Children are brimful of loyalty. If our schools made more of this instinct, they would wield an enormous power for good in the whole life of each child, as well as finding a short cut to the concrete results they want to obtain. Also they would be preparing the natural faculties for the more spiritual development. If our schools took a little extra trouble to work up a tradition (like a regiment), and a spirit (like a religious order), and had a few concrete counsels of perfection (like the scouts), and if possible a touch

[1] *The Givers*, p. 181.
[2] *The Way into the Kingdom*, p. 64.

of romance worked in, membership of the school would become a very real thing."[1] We want all our children to have the vocational instinct of being a Catholic. The juvenile sodalities now so popular—*e.g.*, the Knights and Handmaids of the Blessed Sacrament—offer a fruitful training-ground. The popularity of the scouts is in large measure due to the uniform. The same is true of the girl guides. Youth likes to don some mark of distinction. The red sash of the Knights of the Blessed Sacrament is an attraction; the badge is a hall-mark, and we should satisfy that natural craving in our youth.

How is the vocational aim to be stimulated and strengthened in youth? The author appeals to us to enter and bid our youth follow through the door of imagination: "In all this the imagination plays a large part. It is the door that leads to children's hearts, and we must enter through it. We waste time and energy battering on other doors that are ever closed and silent. Open imagination's portal and all will go apace, because the Catholic Faith was devised by God, who was also an omniscient Man, and who planned out His Church in just the very way most certain to appeal to the imagination of His little children."[2]

The High School.

We now come to the third and last stage in *The Sower* Scheme, which begins about the age of twelve and culminates in leaving school, or about the sixteenth year. In this period there is another four years' doctrine course, with all the emphasis on things to be done in Church and Catholic life. In content and method the course obeys the principle of William James: "The proper pedagogic moment to graft on is when native interests are most acutely present." The scheme acts psychologically in making the growing child its centre. "Our business here is to remember the characteristics of this particular age—its awakened judgement and

[1] *The Way into the Kingdom*, p. 66.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 68.

criticism, its need of ideals, its bent towards practical service, its intense group spirit."[1]

The purpose in content and method is "to introduce the young people to all the many-sided glories of the Catholic Faith, in such a fashion that by one road or another they will all come to have a vital interest in their religion, which will survive and keep on growing amidst the thousand new interests which await them on leaving school."[2]

The object in view is to open the door of God's treasure house, and to display the glittering riches before the youth, so that captivated by the beauty and attracted by the variety of the treasures, each boy and girl may fall a victim to the charms of some jewel in the array. "In this third or adolescent stage of religious instruction, there is not so much need to aim at systematic completeness; the thing wanted is an all-round acquaintance with Catholicism, even if it has to be gained by quick raids and reconnaissances here and there, or by individual research on the part of members of the class. Some imaginations will be fired by history, some by liturgy, some by social study; some wills may be moved by the Lives of the Saints, some by an instruction on the Holy Eucharist, some by a Lenten practice of self-denial, some perhaps by looking after the May Altar. Try everything, and give everybody a chance, so long as your young person begins to give a 'real' instead of a 'notional' assent to some point or corner of the Catholic Faith, it matters little which; for the Faith has gained a hold on the mind which it will increase and extend. A bridgehead has been captured and consolidated, this or that particular regiment made the successful assault and got across the river, but the rest of the army will be able to follow now."[3]

The Content.

(*a*) *Doctrine.*—From the topmost lookout, equipped with powerful field-glass, what is the youth expected to pick

[1] *The Givers*, p. 181. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 181.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 185.

out from the broad rolling panorama of God's Church? "In this third stage the Catechism will no longer be the daily text-book, but used as a familiar authority to appeal to, as one uses it in sermons. Once more the whole ground of Christian practice and doctrine will be more or less covered, but this time in a way at once broader and more detailed. The course would naturally include more advanced teaching about the spiritual life, the use of the Sacraments, about various Commandments and Counsels, about frequent Communion, and so forth. But one would also like to introduce these older pupils into several theological or quasi-theological regions, some of which the laity are seldom invited to tread. One would like to give them, for instance, as vivid and real an idea as possible of God's nature and attributes, because a man who has once got hold of the true idea of God can never be an atheist and not easily a free-thinker. Again, it should be possible to show them how the Incarnation, so cursorily treated in the Catechism, is the all-embracing fact of the Catholic Faith and life. Again, it would be desirable to make use of any means available to impress them with the historical reality of the Gospels, and help them to realise that these things really happened; so that if they ever pick up Renan's commentary or some similar book, it shall not strike them as a likelier interpretation of the Gospels than the one they learned at school."[1]

In the advanced courses prescribed for senior pupils in the new Irish programme of Religious Instruction, the Catechism remains as a part of the course in doctrine. It is not looked upon as a text-book to be mastered, but rather as a reference book where the reasoned doctrine of the apologetic stage is seen simply stated. One of the reasons urged for this practice is that the older pupils leave school with an appreciation of the Catechism, which they did not have in the middle school. Coming from their text-book in apologetics, they see the value of a concise, accurate, and simple statement of the dogma, and they realise the worth of such a book as the Catechism.

[1] *The Givers*, pp. 181-182.

(*b*) *History*.—Parallel with this extensive course in doctrine the scheme stresses the necessity of history. Indeed, history is the most prominent feature of the scheme, and in this stage it becomes the dominant branch. Throughout the scheme history is important. Old Testament, New Testament, and Church History are conceived as one organic and continuous whole. Systematic history begins in the third period, the way having been prepared for it in the first and second periods by the telling of stories carefully chosen from the whole range of religious history with a gradually increasing attention to historical background. In *The Sower* the Editor appeals to teachers to use the historian's tools—*i.e.*, maps, pictures, local background. "With a constant appeal to local colour, history becomes a great panorama, every new scene or incident a vivid coloured picture, fascinating, unforgettable. Centuries do not go by numbers, but by the way people dress, behave, fight. Our mediæval ancestors were wise when they beautified their churches with 'storied windows.' The mystery play, the guild play, the passion play of the Middle Ages gave a teaching in history which the schools lacked."[1]

What does the scheme outline in history? "The history of revealed religion, not in unnatural isolation, but brought into its proper relation to the general history of mankind," is the aim. Again, "They should possess the idea of the Church's development and know why the Catholic Church ruled by Benedict XV is so much more elaborate and intricate than the Church under Peter."[2]

History is to be the medium through which the children are to be interested in the fascinating story of God's Church and His Saints. But it is to be much more. "In particular we are not in favour of a systematic course of apologetics as a school subject. It is not at all suited to immature minds or to unskilled teachers, since it is nothing if it is not a genuine assembling and weighing of doctrine. The true apologetics for the young is history."[3]

[1] Extract from the Editor's notes in *The Sower*.
[2] *The Givers*, p. 182. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 184.

(*c*) *Sociology.*—Sociology is also introduced: "The great Catholic principles of social justice should be laid down, with such reference, or absence of reference, to current controversies as might be deemed advisable."[1]

(*d*) *Liturgy.*—Other features on which the scheme lays a good deal of stress are liturgy and singing: "And then there is the Liturgy—the Church's year, ecclesiastical music, and, above all, the Mass."[2]

(*e*) *Apologetics.*—A mild form of apologetics is availed of. "They should have also some elementary non-argumentative apologetics; they should know what to think of the peculiarly English heresy that it does not matter of what religion you are as long as you live righteously; they should be quite clear on the subject of miracles; they should realise that although our Lord came in the character of a Prophet, and not an administrator, nevertheless He certainly did found His visible Church, and to some extent actually organised it Himself. They should also be suitably prepared to remain undisturbed by flippant objections to the Bible drawn from the Old Testament."[3] But this is best done, according to the scheme, on historical lines.

The Argument for the Course.

This is a formidable course to be covered in four years by children of twelve to sixteen years. The scheme admits that "the list is portentously long," but adds an apologia for prescribing it. "The point we wish to insist on is that this kind of thing is not a luxury, but a necessity, and not only for secondary schools, but also, as far as practical, for elementary schools—for every Catholic, in fact, who has to live his religion in our modern world."[4]

Again, "It will be seen, then, that we are not asking that the ordinary Catholic should be equipped to defend the Church. We do not see why he or anyone else should be concerned to defend the Church. The Church is not a fortress to be defended, but an army on the move. Simply we are

[1] *The Givers*, p. 183.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 183.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 183.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 183.

saying this: In an educated community, the practice of Catholicism will lapse in the long run, or be confined to those who happen to be religious by temperament, if the ordinary Catholic does not know the why and wherefore of his Catholic practices. . . . The ordinary Catholic should know the why and wherefore of his religion as he knows the why and wherefore of anything else that intimately touches his life. He needs some insight not only into the *rational* why and wherefore of religious things, as it is explained in Catechism and doctrinal treatise, but also into what might be called the *psychological* why and wherefore, because the proper study of mankind is man; and also into the *historical* why and wherefore, because Catholicism may be said to flourish or decay very much in proportion as its collective memory of its own origins—what we call tradition—is fresh or dimmed in the mind of every ordinary Catholic."[1]

The argument is sound. Janet Erskine Stuart writes in her *Education of Catholic Girls*: "The end of Catholic education is to produce Catholics who can stand on their own legs apart from any props of custom and environment."[2] The educator must look to the after-school years as the testing time. It is life that tries the value of education. The end of our schools is to produce enlightened and virtuous Catholics. We lay the foundations of that in school days, but we are failures if the building does not continue in the after-school years. Let us face the situation. We see our children at school, good, pious, industrious. We watch them in after years, and what a disappointment is ours sometimes! There is a leakage. We have painful experiences of the hot-house plant type of Catholic, whose faith withers and dies when he leaves the shelter and warmth of a religious environment. We may blame indifferent homes and parents for a large percentage, but the vital questions for us must be: Is our religious doctrine course sufficient to combat the influence of a careless home? Is the trend of our teaching

[1] *The Givers*, pp. 184-185.

[2] *The Education of Catholic Girls*, Janet E. Stuart (Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1912), p. 130.

towards an appreciation of religious truth and the formation of a lasting habit of virtue ?

" To lead children to know, love, and serve Him here on earth " is the slogan of the Catholic school. The knowledge of God comes first, but it is a knowing that begets love, and from love is born a generous service. If we claim that a knowledge of Faith leads to its practice—and we rightly claim that it does—then the why and wherefore of his Catholic practices is an essential equipment for the ordinary layman. In secular matters teachers sometimes deceive themselves unwittingly; for example, teachers spend much time in teaching their pupils *about* English literature, instead of leading them to the literature itself. In catechetics let us avoid that trap and concentrate on teaching the youth his religion, and not so much *about* religion.

The scheme insists that " we are not asking that the ordinary Catholic should be equipped to defend the Church." It makes the personal equipment of knowledge of Faith its goal. We suggest that the aim is not injured or lessened by the minor and subordinate aim of the missionary idea. One end can contain many minor ends, provided they are not antagonistic to each other. Newman erred in *The Idea of a University* by making his end exclusive of, and antagonistic to, any other end that may be considered subordinate or contributory. " One idea is not another idea " is his oft-repeated argument. In other words, " take it as it is or leave it." The personal equipment has a natural missionary outcome, which can be presented to children as a minor end. The vocation of the Church, and therefore of every individual Catholic in his measure is a missionary one. We do not use that aim sufficiently in catechetics. How often is this brought before our youth as a further reason why they should diligently study their Faith ? Yet it is an aim that appeals. " You are learning doctrine, history, liturgy, sociology, so that you may leave school an enlightened member of the lay apostolate which seeks to bring others into the true Church," proposes a motive that has the appeal of romance for our youth. Any apostolic effort appeals to

youth. Picture for them the opportunities they will have in office, in shop, or on the land—in fact, wherever their lot in life is cast—when anxious questioning minds will approach them for light and guidance. Now is the time to gather in knowledge. It is worth while keeping that purpose in view and frequently to refer to it, especially with the children of this age.

The Method.

We live in an age of questioning when everything is brought before the bar of reason and asked to account for itself. Religion is no exception. Consequently if we are to equip our youth to meet life as it is, we must give him " a reason for the faith that is in him." In this stage we aim at leading the child to think in religion. We hope to form his will. The will follows the understanding. The training of the will lies in the field of intellect. Therefore he must know the why and wherefore of his Catholic practices.

All this is admitted. The point to settle is, How can we hope to teach all this formidable array of Christian doctrine in a period of four years, considering that we have about a half-hour each day to do it in? *The Sower* Scheme offers the following solution to the question: " What we urge is not so complex and impossible as it may sound, it is much more a matter of possessing certain indispensable ideas than of mastering a great many facts or reasonings—indispensable ideas, which, in themselves, are no more difficult than the ideas in the Catechism, though they do not happen to occur there. . . . There is not so much need to aim at systematic completeness."[1]

Principles rather than information and fact knowledge form the hoped-for result. Thoroughness of detail and reasoning is not sought for. There is no appeal for microscopic lens for the field-glasses in use at the lookout on top of the tower.

The scheme claims that the method of unifying known as " correlation " will lessen the burden on pupil and the

[1] *The Givers*, pp. 183 and 185.

strain on teacher. "Still less are we saying that all the things enumerated above should be treated as separate 'subjects' or divisions of religious instruction. In secondary schools, not to mention our places of higher study, religion is already in danger of being divided up too much into 'subjects' thought of as unconnected. Even the least ambitious school has separate mental pigeon-holes for Catechism, Old Testament, New Testament, and the Gospel for the something-or-other local examination; and any additions are usually made in the form of new layers or subjects, with each perhaps its different time and its different teacher, Church History, and apologetics, and Holy Scripture, and social study. But these things are all one. To divide them off from each other in this way may conduce to logical statement, but it does not make for reality. Bible History and Church History are one continuous story. Catholic history and Catholic liturgy and Catholic doctrine and Catholic apologetics are one—that is to say, they are not really different regions of fact, but at most only different angles from which one observes that living thing Catholicism."[1]

This is not an imaginary supposition. Our experience has shown beyond doubt that it is a real danger in catechetics. For examination purposes it sometimes is necessary in written and oral to divide the course into sections as Doctrine, Instruction, Liturgy, Bible History, Church History, Sociology. That does not mean that the divisions should be looked upon as water-tight compartments within the school. The parts cannot stand alone. Catholicism is a living thing, and we must teach it as one thing. The divisions should be intermingled and made to help each other whenever possible. This principle runs through the whole school from infants to high school. Sometimes the Catechism answers may be easily explained by reference to Bible History. For example, the answer which is a puzzle to so many children—"Those also go to Purgatory who die indebted to God's Justice on account of mortal sin"—may be explained by reference

[1] *The Givers*, pp. 183-184.

to the Old Testament, which abounds in examples of temporal punishment imposed by God.

Teachers' Aids.

The scheme expects its hand-book *Twelve and After* to be used by the teachers of this stage. It is a very useful aid, a mine of fresh and interesting matter, and it is exceedingly rich in suggestions in method. The only text-book prescribed here for the pupil is a good note-book. The note-book habit is the most essential thing in this stage of the scheme. The method may be summarised as a constant use of, and reference to, the pupil's note-book. Note-books are a necessary adjunct to good teaching. Much of the work done in class is lost unless the pupil has some adequate sort of reminder. In this stage the note-book habit adapts itself to the group-spirit, the "gang-age," when children want to go in packs foraging for material. The constant use of reference books, the looking-it-up habit, is fostered and encouraged by the note-book.

In this period there is more need of a good reference library to which the pupils are to be sent. The religious equipment must be as good as that provided for the secular branches, unless we allow this subject to suffer in the estimation of the child so quick to judge the relative value set upon things by the grown-up world. "I am now suggesting that we adapt a new and higher standard of religious equipment altogether, and accept the idea of spending such and such a sum per head in this way every year, not necessarily a large sum, once the original equipment was there."[1]

The "bent towards practical service" is to be catered for by opening up more avenues of service to the youth of this period—for example, Altar Societies, Vincent de Paul Societies, membership in the Catholic Truth Societies. "Its need of ideals" is to be fostered by biographical reading, debates, and lecturettes. Biographies are object lessons we can point to—ideals that are within the reach of all,

[1] Report on the Schools of the Diocese of Birmingham, 1925, by Rev. F. H. Drinkwater, the Editor of *The Sower*.

men we can point to who lived amid our conditions and climbed high because their eyes were open to see their brother's need and their hearts ready to succour him. "Its intense group-spirit" (it has been well called the "gang-age") "is satisfied by the looking-it-up method of the classroom, and the looking-someone-up ideal of the Vincent de Paul Society."

Comment.

There are many features in this stage of *The Sower* Scheme that appeal. A greater freedom to select content and follow methods is given the individual teacher than is commonly the case at present. The teacher's aid, *Twelve and After*, is organised according to the liturgical year. The teacher may follow that order. A variety in materials and in methods is supplied so that the teacher may make his own choice.

The "why and wherefore of religious practices" is an essential equipment for our youth to-day, especially in the newer lands where the riot of sects and creeds is a danger to the Catholic ignorant of first principles. The scheme looks towards the after-school years. Examinations, either public or private, do not dominate the classroom. This stage is more concerned with enkindling a spark of enthusiasm in the youth for some part of the many-sided life of Catholicism, than sending forth children equipped with stacks of facts carefully assorted in pigeon-holes. It hopes that "some imaginations will be fired by history, some by social study, some by liturgy," while at school, and that in after years the spark will be fanned into a flame.

ITS DOCTRINE OF INTEREST.

The whole scheme rests on the corner-stone of interest. There is no need to make Christian doctrine interesting, because it is interesting already. The task is to discover the right approaches to it, and to open the gates for our children at school to enter. To do this means that the

child is to be the centre, and the religious educator must seek out his interests at different ages and build upon them. Guided by the head-lights of psychology, we know the nature of the child at different ages. We must have a bull's-eye lantern as well if we are to watch for individual likes, experiences, and interests. Almost every child has some special aptitudes or interests of his own—hobbies are as varied as human nature. If we make use of these hobbies as the starting-point of interest in higher things, then our progress will be sure and swift. To harness the natural to the supernatural is the best way to advance the supernatural. That was the method of Christ in his catechising. He invested the countryside with meanings so that the sight of the cornfields, the birds of the air, the sower at his sowing, brought back the lesson. He built on interest as the natural foundation, and from thence soared heavenwards.

Accepting as his definition that "interest is the growing end of the mind," the author of *The Sower* Scheme writes: "Whenever you find a corner of the mind that is growing, make the most of it." He analyses the leakage, and concludes that the defect is due to wrong foundations being laid in school for Christian doctrine. "What happens to many a Catholic when he leaves school? His mind and imagination go on developing in a thousand ways, *he* grows up, but his religious ideas do not grow up with the rest of him, but remain stationary. All his life his ideas are about twelve years old; what wonder if they very soon cease to affect his conduct? When we ask *why* his religious ideas do not grow up, the answer must be that they have not found a place in the growing end of his mind; they have been stacked neatly in some pigeon-hole away in the back of his head, and there they stay covered with the dust of years. In other words, he never got *interested* in his religion; if he had been interested in it, it would have kept on growing in his mind and relating itself to the other departments of his life."[1]

[1] *The Givers*, pp. 127-128.

Parish Church and Parish School.

What appeals to us most in the whole scheme is the endeavour to link together more closely the Church and school, the pastor and teacher, the Church and home, the school and home. It has been our experience that the schools, where the priest lends a helping hand in taking a Catechism class, in giving short instructions, in encouraging the children to do things in the parish church, in opening up the service of the Altar to the school—give the best results. Children will learn from sister or brother, but the priest's explanation is something different. They feel that he is the real expounder of Christian doctrine, it is his special vocation, and they accept it as such. The closer association of parish church and parish school provides an opportunity of preparing the children to understand and participate in the great liturgical movement that is spreading throughout the Catholic world.

Prominence of History.

I like the prominent part that Church History plays in the scheme. However, I have found this the most difficult lead to follow. When proposing it to the teachers I am always met with the objection: "We have no supply of Church Histories for school use." The texts for schools that are commonly used are not satisfactory. I differ from the scheme in holding that a text-book of readings on Church History would be a decided adjunct in this stage. Dissatisfied with texts, I suggested to the teachers that they should write their own. In 1925 some teachers, in co-operation with their classes, produced valuable notes on the following topics: "The Island of Saints and Scholars," "The Great Western Schism," "The Oxford Movement," and "The Pioneer Priests of Australia." The aim of this co-operative contribution is to have the history of the period centre around a great figure. In their deeds and thoughts we seek the characteristics of the times they lived

in. Persons and their active lives are the mountain peaks around which the history of each period lies outspread.

Apologetics.

I differ from the scheme on the question of apologetics. For seven years I have used the text-book, *Apologetics*, of Archbishop Sheehan, in the secondary stages. The teachers are quite satisfied with the progress made. Last year I gave the option to our advanced classes to drop apologetics and take a wider course in Church History. No school in the archdiocese availed itself of the choice—all kept on the apologetic course. If teachers and pupils want it, and are doing it well, then why discard it for history? Again, it is not always easy to extract the apologia element from history. The programme of the Irish Hierarchy for colleges and secondary schools prescribes Archbishop Sheehan's *Apologetics*, I and II, for the senior pupils. Normally those pupils would be over sixteen years of age. The average age of the leaving classes in Australia would be higher than sixteen. Perhaps *The Sower* Scheme did not consider the over sixteen pupils when it discarded apologetics for history.

Lack of time is an obstacle to the smooth running of this elaborate programme. Father Drinkwater assumes that "nearly an hour a day is given to religion in our schools." Unfortunately we must admit that that is too generous an assumption. For the greater part of the year the time allotted to religion is half an hour each day. Some extra time is usually given to it when the inspector's visit or the examination is at hand. Were the looking-up part of this stage done outside the religious period, it might be possible to cover the outlined course in the time allotted. I have found it impossible to do as the scheme suggests in half an hour each day.

Conclusion: An Ideal and a Reform.

The Sower Scheme sets before us an ideal—a goal well worth the striving for. We are grateful to those who fashioned that ideal. But the practical question is: Are our

teachers of Christian doctrine ready for the climb up that steep hill of reform? The scheme offers rich pastures whereon the able teacher can browse at will, pick and choose, and direct his steps towards the goal. But all our teachers are not equally gifted. The theory and practice of catechetics is advancing to-day because a renaissance has taken place in the religious teaching of our schools. One may judge the interest devoted to the subject by the number and variety of catechetical periodicals and treatises that are being issued. Although we may not be quite ready for all that the scheme suggests, yet there are many ideas that are acceptable and workable here and now.

As a reform it avoids the mistakes of past reformers in the history of education. The field of educational practice is strewn with the wreckage of past experiments. Each reform went too far. In its rush to improve on the old, it forgot that the old was not all rotten; there were sound, healthy parts that could be carried over. These were dropped in the chase, and in consequence valuable time was lost in picking them up later. This reform begins well. It concentrates on the teachers. Its hand-books are teachers' aids, supplying material for lessons and suggesting ways of using it. This reform does not err by excess. Using the available material, the scheme aims at a better outlook and a surer manipulation of content and method. There is no attempt to replace the English Catechism. Memory work is not railed at. The only extra burden of expense imposed on the school lies in the items of more chalk for the teacher and note-books for the pupils. Many articles have been written on catechetics of late, and their appeal has always been in the hope of easing the strain. *The Sower* Scheme goes deeper, tackling the question of reform from the psychologist's view-point, "giving evidence of scientific insight, a wideness of purview, and withal a kindness and moderation altogether admirable."[1] In its reform there is a wise freedom.

[1] *The Sower*, review of *Religion in School*, May, 1921, No. 24, p. 191.

THE CATECHETICAL METHOD EXAMINED

We have reviewed several ways of teaching religion. The Munich Method was the forerunner of the many laudable attempts to raise the standard of catechetics within the school. Under the guidance of Herbart it put the teaching of religion on psychological foundations. "Begin with the story" was its creed, and it is remarkable what a number of converts it won in a short time. The Munich Method has influenced all succeeding efforts at catechetical reform. It was the pioneer. But the fathers of the method are honourable enough to admit that the inspiration which urged them, and the light which guided them, came from the pages of *De Catechizandis Rudibus* of St Augustine.

Dr. Yorke of San Francisco makes a contribution in the form of *The Text-books of Religion*. His method is a personal application of the principles that underlie the Munich Method. We cannot call it a new method. We select it for review because it is typical of other adaptations of the Munich principles through text-books.

The Sower Scheme comes next on our list. It subscribes to the same article of faith as the Munich Method: "Begin with the story." It distrusts the leadership of Herbart. It accepts the "concentric" plan, so widely used in the teaching of history in German schools, and makes this the principle of organisation, which divides school life into (1) Story cycle, (2) Catechism cycle, and (3) History cycle. We may trace back the "concentric plan" to Comenius, whose biological illustrations of the psychological order have left a deep and lasting impression on German education. *The Sower* Scheme proposes a new attitude for the teacher and another approach to the child.

All these ways make the Catechism text an essential instrument. The catechesis, or oral instruction through question and answer, is maintained as a cardinal point in method. Before we pass on to the Shields Method, which dispenses with the Catechism text, it is fitting that a survey of methods should discuss the fundamental topic of the Catechetical Method.

Our treatment will be necessarily brief, consisting in the answers to three questions:

I. Is the Catechetical Method the traditional one of the Church?
II. Is it sound pedagogically?
III. Why has it been discarded in secular subjects?

I. Traditional Method of the Church.

The Catechetical Method, which consists of oral instruction in question and answer, is the traditional one the Church has used from the beginning. "The system of oral instruction was followed in the synagogue and in the pagan schools; it may have been inherited by the Church from either source, or possibly from both. The earliest form of catechetical instruction in the Church is represented by the instructions mentioned in the Epistles of St Paul; the next specimen would most probably be the Didache, about A.D. 130."[1]

"Considering the origin of the Christian Church, it would be strange it if were not so, seeing how it is imbedded in that most ancient ceremony, the Passover supper of the Jews."[2] As a boy of twelve years Christ spent three days in the Temple hearing and asking questions. In this he followed the Jewish custom. During the festival weeks of the Pasch, when Jerusalem was crowded, the Sanhedrin doctors and judges would come out on the terraces of the Temple and there teach and lecture to the people. The listeners were allowed the utmost liberty in putting questions,

[1] *De Catechizandis Rudibus*, translated by P. J. Christopher, p. 1.
[2] *Teaching of Religion*, P. C. Yorke, p. 29.

raising objections, and taking part in the discussions. It might be described as the first platform of evidence lectures. The home was also a religious school for the family. The feasts were celebrated as family events, and it was the duty of the head of the house to explain them. Edersheim, in his sketches of Jewish social life, relates that "at the Paschal supper, especially the youngest at the table should rise and ask the meaning of the service, and how that night differed from others; to which the father was to reply, relating in language suitable to the child's capacity the whole national history of Israel from the calling of Abraham down to the deliverance from Egypt and giving of the Law. And the more fully he explains it all, it is added, the better."[1]

The Catechetical Method was used by Christ throughout the whole course of His public life. He set the minds of His hearers on edge, and through their questions He led them to the personal solution of their problems. His method was to stimulate His audience to ask questions. "Looking back to the Master, who taught the humble and the great, the unlettered and the learned, who spoke in parable and story, in proverb and similitude, who not only questioned His disciples, but, as the Gospel frequently says, 'answering, spoke unto them,' the teacher of religion will find his inspiration."[2]

From the Catechumenate to the sixteenth century oral instruction in the form of question and answer was the method of teaching religion employed by the Church. There was no text placed in the hands of the child. The catechumens were instructed orally, and then examined before being admitted to Baptism. The only catechetical work preserved to us from that remote period is the treatise of St Augustine, *De Catechizandis Rudibus*, a work intended for teachers and written at the request of one, the deacon Deogratias of Carthage. "As

[1] *The Givers*, F. H. Drinkwater, "Jewish Education about the Time of Christ," pp. 99-109.

[2] "Methods of Teaching Religion," by P. T. McCormick, *C.E.R.*, September, 1918, p. 106.

for his contribution to the method of catechising, Augustine was the first to appreciate the value of question and answer in studying the candidate and in sifting his motives for wishing to become a Christian. It was, most probably, from his treatise that later authors of Catechisms got the idea of imparting instructions by means of question and answer."[1]

In the Middle Ages this method was the universal one in use. In the Catechumenate attention was given to adults; now the child was to come in for the largest share of attention. There were no text-books for children. The oral instruction of the pastors was supplemented by the pictures that adorned the churches, by the "Bibles of the Poor," and by the dramatic representations of Biblical history.

II. Is the Question and Answer Method Sound Pedagogically?

It would be sufficient proof to quote the example of Christ in favour of the method to establish its claim to be considered sound pedagogically. Moreover, the method has been used by the great teachers of history, and remains to-day the basis of scientific discussion. Socrates ranks with the great teachers of all time. His question and answer method has become a model for teachers anxious to make their pupils think. The "Socratic" method is accepted in all schools of educational thought. Socrates made men think, and they who conducted their lives by custom and conventionality, by habit rather than thought, grew inquisitive and thoughtful as they listened to the master's questions. Socrates was a catechist, an asker of questions.

The method is scientific, and progress is impossible without its use. St Thomas begins each chapter by setting himself a question, "Utrum." It lies at the basis of science. It may not be expressed as a list of questions and answers, but in essence discussion is a form of the Catechetical Method. Where no questions are raised there are no discussions. If a method wishes to be scientific, it must retain this manner of approaching the subject.

[1] *De Catechizandis Rudibus*, ed. cit., p. 4.

In the teaching of religion we cannot discard this method if we wish to retain a scientific manner of study. But in its application to catechetics there are limitations and adaptations to be considered. Socrates used this method with adults who had some ideas. The questions set them thinking: they were baits set for the listeners to exercise their minds. Christ made man think by His questions. His teaching provoked His hearers to put questions to Him. "And they wondered at the eloquence that fell from His lips." Wonder is the beginning of wisdom. It is the felt need that sets a man thinking. But He also was addressing adults. Applying the method to immature minds the teacher has a different problem. The means are to be accommodated to the end. This brings me to the answer of another question. If questions are fundamental in the Catechetical Method, what is the psychology of questions?

The Psychology of Questions.

For successful use the Catechetical Method must have its auxiliaries. To be used profitably it presupposes that the pupil has some knowledge before he can answer the questions. The abuse of the method is due to the fact that the matter was not properly taught before the questions were asked. Questions are necessary adjuncts to the substance of the lesson. Though valuable to teachers and taught, they remain subsidiary, a means to the end of teaching. It is in the hearing of lessons that questioning tends to usurp the place of teaching. Setting a lesson and hearing it is not teaching. Questioning on work done is a means of teaching, and aims at improving the knowledge of the actual thing repeated. If a pupil knows the answer, why ask him? Psychology replies that the pupil's answer increases his knowledge. The expression of it clarifies the possession of knowledge in his mind. Each time he states the answer he teaches himself as the teacher taught him in the beginning. Here is the chief value of the Catechetical Method. It is an exchange between teacher and pupil.

The teacher's questions and the pupil's answers bring into clearer consciousness the ideas, which, as time goes on, must be expressed in words more concise and accurate.

A Good Questioner is a Good Teacher.

The maxim, "A good questioner is a good teacher," is true if we bear in mind the relative importance questions bear to the end of the lesson. The power to question well is one of the fine arts of teaching, and, being an art, it demands practice to be perfected. The best note of a lesson is a list of questions. By taking thought, and by the practice of self-examination, we improve our art. It is in such self-criticisms that the rules of questioning commonly given in books on teaching are useful. The main fault in questioning is lack of precision—*e.g.*, "What do you know about prayer?" bears on no definite point and cannot be satisfactorily answered by the child. Let the question be short, precise, and to the point. The immediate memory of children of ten years is limited to four to five words, and generally remains such up to thirteen years. It increases to five to six words at fifteen years. Adults have usually from ten to twelve words, while the average maximum is fourteen words. If the wording of the question is not brief, the question is waste, because the child cannot retain it. Be sure of the answer you want before you ask a question—*i.e.*, stop to think—otherwise you reap loss of time and loss of temper as the natural return. Children pick up phrases and words which mean one thing to them and another to the teacher. In asking a question, two things are essential: (1) that we stop to think on it, (2) that we remember that our purpose is to convey thought to another. It must be stated so that it will be grasped by the other as we intend it to be. The child's readiness to reproduce words often deceives the teacher. That is the danger in the Catechetical Method unless supplemented with auxiliaries. It may result in verbal memorising, and in the appearance rather than the reality of learning. The dialogue between teacher and class in these circumstances shows that

it is the teacher who is doing the thinking, and the class acts as an echo.

Questions might be summarised under three headings: (1) the test question, (2) the thought question, (3) the child's question. A few remarks under each heading:

(1) *The Test Question.*—Questions are mental crutches on which the pupil leans. With young children attention is fluctuating, and they need some support. The higher up we go in the grades the less need of these supports. When the child is willing to walk, and we know that he is able, why insist on him using crutches? A child can follow a narrative, an exposition, without interruptions and breaks caused by questions. The talking teacher puts questions that keep him talking. If we wish to produce broad effects in literature, Bible stories—in fact, in all lessons in which part of our success depends upon touching the emotions—it is a mistake to break into our narrative with questions. To stop in the middle of poetical reading to ask the meaning of a word is destructive of the literary value of the lesson. In such cases we must trust to the context and the atmosphere we have produced to bring about the right total effect, even when the details are not clear in the children's minds.

Questions help the teacher to test the pupil's knowledge. They are the normal form of repetition. They help to maintain attention, and anything which keeps the class from wandering is useful.

(2) *The Thought-provoking Question.* This type of question gives to the Catechetical Method its real value. Such was the method of Christ. "Our Saviour's questions were calculated to call forth the thought and belief of His disciples in their own words. His was a method of drawing out and developing the content of the disciple's mind. He asks His disciples questions to compel them to see the inevitable conclusion of a premise, the strict fulfilment of a prophecy, or the practical application of some doctrine that he taught."[1]

[1] "Notes on Education," by T. E. Shields, *C.U.B.*, vol. xvi, p. 267.

Spirago says to the catechist: "In regard to the children the great principle is, keep their minds busy with your subject. Make them think and enquire, ask and answer. Children are naturally active and want to be busy. It is, then, of the utmost importance to concentrate their activity upon the lesson. To make them do so, make them talk about it. Hence the golden rule of the catechist: Speak little and make the children speak much. Dubois remarks that 'almost all catechists are great talkers: this is a crying abuse.' There is a great pedagogical truth in the saying, 'To make the children speak the teacher must know how to keep silent himself.' There is nothing which tires children quicker than a long talk—hence the importance of questions in class."[1]

In religion we teach as "having authority." Socrates asked questions which he could not solve. His teaching emphasised the question. Christ asked questions in order that He might instruct His audience. Religious teachers have a wide scope within the field of authoritative teaching for questions that provoke thought. The problem method can be used extensively. "The business of a Catholic teacher is to teach dogmatically. Nevertheless, his teaching defeats its own end if he does not set his hearers' minds working. No amount of didactic instruction can take the place of the activity of the 'growing end of the mind,' and you learn more (whether you are a child or a man) by trying to do a thing yourself than by all the preliminary lessons on how to do it."[2]

The teacher of religion can put questions which stimulate thought, questions which suggest problems without suggesting solutions, questions which give the minimum prompting required to carry on a lesson, questions which make the pupils contribute to the development of the lesson, questions which grow out of the pupils' answers. Professor Adams appeals to the teacher to create a vacuum in the minds of his pupils, and set them to fill it. He writes: "There is no true teach-

[1] Spirago's *Method of Christian Doctrine*, translated by Messmer.
[2] *The Givers*, F. H. Drinkwater, pp. 147-148.

ing unless it brings about learning. Teaching and learning are correlative processes. Unless the pupil learns because of what the teacher does, there has been no real teaching. As old David Stow used to bore his young students by reiterating in season and out of season: ' A thing is not given until it is taken, a lesson is not taught until it is learnt.' There must be a causal relation between the work of the teacher and the learning of the pupil. The business of the classroom must be carried out as a partnership in which the teacher is the directing spirit and the pupil does most of the work. Naturally, this does not mean that under the new schemes he is to have an easier time than before, but merely that in the classroom he is to take a less prominent part than under the old scheme. In order that he may have to do little overt work during the lesson hour, the teacher must make careful and sometimes laborious preparations beforehand."[1]

(3) *The Pupils' Questions.*—Christ made His hearers think, and as a result they plied Him with questions. His teaching was occasional, and the occasion was generally a question. One of the scribes asked, " Who is my neighbour ?" and in answer we receive the parable of the Good Samaritan. St Augustine wrote his classic on catechetics in answer to Deogratias, a deacon of Carthage, who had asked what should be the subject-matter and what the method in catechising candidates. " In fact, most of Augustine's works were occasional, arising in response to some specific need."[2]

It is interesting to note that in the specimen lessons published in the *Catholic Press* of Sydney by Archbishop Sheehan, as preliminary notes on the new Catechism, the pupil asks the questions and the teacher answers. The familiar *Q.* (Question) and *A.* (Answer) of our Catechisms are now replaced by *C.* (Child) and *T.* (Teacher). The Child asks the questions.

The questions of the teacher play a useful part in teaching, but the questions of children are much more important.

[1] *Modern Developments in Educational Practice,* John Adams (University of London Press, London, 1925), pp. 214-215.

[2] *De Catechizandis Rudibus,* translated by P. J. Christopher, p. 122.

The Mental Attitude of the Questioner.

Observational psychology explains the mental attitude of the child who asks a question as follows: (1) it is the pedagogic moment to teach him; (2) his receptive faculties are ready; (3) interest is awaiting, keen, on edge; (4) the problem is present to the child; (5) the answer will be a personal tuition; (6) there is less danger of forgetfulness now; (7) it is his excursion into research, he singles out one item from the general mass for special attention, and that is the essence of research. Research is a word we apply to the higher ranges of study, but the child who reads with a question to be solved, or thinks and asks for information, shares the mental attitude of the research student. (8) The child who asks a question appeals to the teacher to put himself in the same position as the enquirer. "When a child asks a question, it shows that his mind is ready for the answer, if not for the whole answer, at any rate for an instalment of the truth. What you tell him *now* will not be wasted, the single sentence of an answer will be more effective *now* than a whole lesson would have been before. When you discourse to the whole class, following a formal programme, you are scattering seeds at random; you may reasonably hope that some will take root, but there is a large element of luck in it. But when you are ready with the right answer to a question, you are planting a seed in a place where it is sure to grow."[1]

A question is a manifestation of interest on the part of the questioner; it is a revelation of the "growing end of the mind." It is an index of his thinking. The child's questions, more than his answers, are the safe guide to his intelligence and to the progress he is making. The child is, by nature, inquisitive. Listen to the ceaseless flow of "What's that, mother?" in train or street car, if you are unfortunate enough to be so situated. The foolish mother attempts to quieten the child, but to no avail. The wise mother answers the questions, and then tactfully weaves a story

[1] *The Way into the Kingdom* (Burns Oates and Washbourne, London, 1927), p. 19.

with her answers. The child listens, and the restlessness ceases. The story quietens the motor centres of the brain by opening up fields for the imagination to roam around. The mind activity releases the motor activity. The child is physically quiet, but mentally romping around the scenes of the story. As the child advances the "what" changes into the "why"—*e.g.*, "Why is the rose red? Why can't I fly like the bird?" The child seeks a reason for all things, but any reason will satisfy him. The mother knows how to answer these "whys" of the child. She speaks to the child in a language of her own, and the child understands.

The Natural Curiosity of the Child.

The child comes to school and we notice a change gradually coming over him. It is observed at home that his "whys" are not so frequent. The natural curiosity and wonder of the child is blunted. This change is often due to fear. The strangeness of the new surroundings frightens him. The understanding teacher will foster that wonder-instinct, especially in religion. The importance of the beginning work in the teaching of religion cannot be over-emphasised. On this point of encouraging the child's questions, as on all points, the first-grade teacher must be *the* master of the school. Her duty as a religious teacher is to keep open God's wonder-book and to display the lore of God's treasure-house before the children. On the portals of the section of the National Museum at Washington devoted to children is the inscription, "Knowledge begins in wonder," and, acting on that credo, the show-cases of wonders are placed temptingly before the visiting child. Plato held that wonder is the mother of all science. Dewey, in *How we Think*, classifies the natural curiosity of children under three headings:

(1) *Physical Curiosity.*—Objects are sucked, fingered, thumped, drawn, pushed, handled, thrown, and experimented with till they cease to yield new qualities.

(2) *Social Curiosity.*—"What is that?" "Why is it?"

are the unfailing proof of a child's presence. His "why" is a search for bigger facts.

(3) *Intellectual Curiosity.*—When observation presents problems to the child and sets him thinking, then his curiosity becomes an intellectual force. "Bacon's saying that we must become as little children in order to enter the kingdom of science is at once a reminder of the open-minded and flexible wonder of childhood, and of the ease with which this endowment is lost. . . . The teacher's task is to keep alive the sacred spark of wonder and to fan the flame that already glows. His problem is to protect the spirit of enquiry, to keep it from becoming blasé from over-excitement, wooden from routine, fossilised through dogmatic instruction, or dissipated by random exercise upon trivial things."[1]

A Child asks Silly Questions.

Were we to count the number of questions asked by the teacher and the number asked by the pupil during an hour, and then compare the proportion asked by each, what would be the result? Would it indicate that teacher and child formed a partnership in search of knowledge? The child in most cases is a very junior partner. The chief objection to giving the child freedom to ask questions is that the silly ones asked are far in excess of the good ones. A silly question is better than none. Unless the pupil makes some advance, be it wise or foolish, you cannot get your lesson going. The child will ask silly questions if questioning the teacher is an occasional treat rather than the daily bread of the schoolroom. Many of the great orators were silly beginners. As long as the teacher usurps the right of asking all the questions—*i.e.*, of doing for the child what the child can only learn by doing for himself—the questions will remain silly. To ask for information and admit ignorance is the right of every child. In a first-class school no child should be ashamed to ask a question, and doing so should not

[1] *How we Think*, John Dewey (D. C. Heath and Co., N.Y., 1909), pp. 33-34.

create the astonishment that Oliver Twist did when he asked for a second helping.

The objection that the foolish questions of the children would waste all the school day is answered by an appeal for opportunities to improve by practice those foolish questions. In a stimulating book entitled *Teaching to Think*, the author asks the question, "How develop initiative in thinking among our pupils?" and answers, "Let the pupils begin by practising those forms of initiative which they naturally incline to and like. Curiosity is perhaps the earliest form of initiative to manifest itself in the individual. Little children are naturally full of curiosity and wonder, and, as a result, ask innumerable questions. Why not begin with utilising this important instinct or talent?"[1]

The Problem of Children's Questions.

The children's questions are the best. Two problems present themselves to a teacher of religion: (1) How can I train pupils to ask questions freely? (2) How can I lead them to evaluate their own questions so as to eliminate the silly ones?

(1) The solution to the first problem may be sought in an exercise of this kind. Suppose we are dealing with a Bible story—*e.g.*, "The miraculous draught of fishes." Fix the next assignment that each pupil will bring in as many questions as he can think about the story. Each pupil must ask some, be they wise or foolish—foolish are better than none. Better insist on a definite number as the minimum, thus compelling all to exert themselves. If any cannot get started, they come to the teacher to start them. The next day a committee of the class is appointed to tabulate all the questions submitted. This gives opportunity for committee work, of which there should be much more in school work. Commend the efforts of the weak pupils, and thus stimulate them to improve. Those who thought of many questions might be asked to tell how they did it. Profitable discussion may follow. Put the questions on the board with the

[1] *Teaching to Think*, Julius Boraas (Macmillan, N.Y., 1922), p. 98.

number of times each was asked, in brackets. With the board facing the class, have a discussion on how to think of questions on Galilee, fishing, the Apostles.

(2) The second problem is to train the child to evaluate his own questions and thus minimise the number of foolish ones. The list of questions, according to times asked, is on the board. This gives an excellent exercise on interpretation. Two questions may be worded differently and yet mean the same thing. Consider the more numerous ones the more important because they are the common sense of the class. Any pupil may question the rating of the questions and thus open a spirited debate. If he carries the day, the order of the rating must be changed accordingly.

(3) Another step is to set a fresh assignment. Find the answers to the questions asked. In the first instance, do not require that the child who asks the questions should know the answer. This assignment may bring a new rating, as some of the less popular questions asked bring more information and therefore deserve a higher place. Again, valuable information may result, about which no question was asked. A general discussion as to which question proved most valuable follows. Then make a final list. As a concluding exercise, the class are asked to draw up a " score-card " for questions.

The mental values of this exercise may be summed up: (1) initiative is developed in each pupil; (2) the teacher can study each pupil and give him some individual instruction; (3) supplies material and motives for vigorous class discussion; (4) gives opportunities for the cultivation of analysis, interpretation, classification of questions; (5) pupils must judge of relative values; (6) gives practice in the suspension of judgement, and in the revision of one's first impression; (7) gives practice in group thinking; (8) gives pupils an opportunity of deciding for themselves whether a given fact is relevant or not, valuable or not, or merely a matter of idle curiosity.[1]

[1] *Teaching to Think* (pp. 98-103) deals with these two problems very fully. Our treatment is a summary and an adaptation of it.

How is the Catechist to answer Children's Questions?

The question is the symptom of the child's thinking, and that is the first fruit of real education. How are we to treat these questions? It will mean much for the child and for religion if one can lead the child to answer his own questions. Nothing succeeds like success, especially in education. The child must experience success in order to discover himself and his courage. The old method of presenting difficulties, in the belief that the child is thus trained to face the difficulties of life, was unpsychological. Exercises were set which resembled the stiff obstacle race, where so many pitfalls are laid that the competitor must be caught. The teacher of that system had a wide canvass for the red pencil, and the corrected copy was certainly a picture to test the stoutest heart among the children. To-day we do everything to prevent mistakes and give ample opportunities for success. We believe that the child will thrive better on the diet of success. By tasting that in the beginning, he argues when difficulties present themselves later on, "Surely I can do this now, when I did so much as a child." He has learned the great lesson. He knows that he has overcome little faults and now takes courage to attack big ones.

We can utilise the child's questions in religion to engender that self-confidence which comes through achievement. Rather than answer off-hand, the teacher makes the child dwell on the question by asking him another. The pupil is made to think. The thinking is directed by the teacher through story or statement or questions, and by that road the pupil is led to answer his own questions. The child forgets that his thinking has been guided by the teacher. He remembers only that the answer to his original question came out of his own head. That delights him and gives him the satisfaction of success, which will foster the habit of asking more questions. Impatience is the sin we must guard against here. The temptation to tell the pupil the answer off-hand is to be banished. We argue with much plausibility that it saves so much time to answer directly. We forget that

the pupil foraging for an answer to his own difficulty is not wasting time, but rather educating himself in the only true sense of the term, through his own mind and efforts.

The Example of Christ.

This was the method of Christ. His teaching stimulated questions. From the purely pedagogical point of view it will help to see how He answered these questions. It would be of great assistance to the teacher of religion to go through the Gospel and collect the questions that were put to Christ. The divine pedagogy of Christ's answers will be the highest model that the catechist can follow. It will be a study that will repay all efforts, to see the difference of circumstances, of bearing, of result, and of the manner of answering which Christ adopted—*e.g.*, in answer to the question, "Who is my neighbour?" we receive the beautiful parable of the Good Samaritan. The questioner is made to think, and he is led through familiar scenes in imagination. The story unfolds the answer to his difficulty, and when Christ asks, "Who was neighbour to him who fell among robbers?" the answer is apparent. By interpolating the parable between the question and the answer, Christ may seem to the impatient teacher to be wasting time. Christ could answer any question. Why did He not do it at once and save time? This gives us a clearer insight into the mind of Christ the Teacher. He delayed the answer until, through parable or statement, He prepared the ground for the seed by making the interrogator do some thinking. When the answer did come, it had a richer content and a more satisfying effect on the enquirer.

On another occasion the Jews came to Him and asked: "Is it lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar?" The question was maliciously put. The answering of it is an object lesson for us teachers. Christ demanded a coin, and turning it over in His fingers He asked: "Whose image is this?" They answered: "Cæsar's." Then came the answer to their original question. "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's." Their attention was captured

by asking for the coin. Their anticipation was on tiptoe when the first question, "Whose image is this?" came. Their minds were working hard endeavouring to forestall the solution of the dilemma. When the final answer came, it sank in, never to be forgotten. They left Him, carrying away with them the lesson which might be expressed as a syllogism. "The coin is to be rendered to him whose image is on it. But Cæsar's is the image on it. Therefore it is to be rendered to Cæsar."

The teacher of religion will copy that example. Sometimes the child's question is best answered by setting him another question that makes him think. Sometimes a statement of the doctrine may be given and then the child is questioned, and from his answers is woven the solution to his original difficulty. This method is followed in the liturgy. At Baptism the child is asked: "What dost thou ask of the Church of God?" "Faith." "What doth faith avail thee?" The answer is made the occasion of an instruction.

Occasionally the teacher may refer the question to another child. "Whom do men say that I am?" "Some say Elias," etc. "But whom do *you* say that I am?" is the example of Christ. In this, however, there must be care and prudence. If the questions are always referred to the same child, the questioner may feel that he is much inferior to that child. That impression may spread over the class, and, as a natural consequence, no one will ask questions. Again, the child to whom the question is always referred may grow conceited, and the class feel slighted. We must not bruise the delicate texture of a child's feelings. They are so easily hurt, and, because that hurt is internal, we may never realise its extent.

Postponing the Answer.

The teacher may postpone the answer to the pupil's question, according to his judgement. By postponing the answer we create the impression in the minds of the children that this is important. The teacher can skilfully make

known that it is necessary to give the question careful consideration. He makes it the subject of a special assignment, and devotes another period to its answer. In the interval the interest of the class is sustained. The pupils return to the next period, knowing that the question is to come up, and they are eagerly awaiting the solution.

On matters of fact it may create a bad impression to postpone habitually the answers to questions. The pupil may beget a wrong idea of the teacher's knowledge. The ordinary child looks on the teacher as omniscient, and to a certain extent he has a right to look to the teacher as a master of the subject. To safeguard one's prestige in the mind of the class, it may be better to answer questions of fact immediately. The danger of off-hand answers to questions is that the pupil easily acquires the habit of thinking that whenever a difficulty arises, all he need do is to ask the teacher. That attitude of pressing a button and back flashes the answer is a wrong one to develop in the pupil. Many young children are spoiled by their mother's eagerness to answer all their questions immediately. The wise mother leads the child to the answer in such a way that the child dwells on it.

Sometimes the catechist may not be able to answer the questions which proceed *ex ore infantium*. Never be afraid to admit defeat. "I do not know, but I should like to find out," carries more weight than hedging.

III. Why has the Plan of Question and Answer been Discarded in Secular Subjects?

The Catechetical Method, which consists of oral instruction in question and answer, is pedagogically sound. No true teaching may ignore it. It has suffered in reputation because of a lopsided use of it. Like the Socratic dialogues, where there is a questioner and a target, so in the schools there has been a teacher and an echo. "Oral instruction is the very soul of the catechesis, and its true spirit is the child hearing and asking questions."[1]

[1] *Teaching of Religion*, P. C. Yorke, p. 34.

The body of the method—*i.e.*,the asking of questions in a mechanical fashion—was cultivated while the soul—*i.e.*, "the child hearing and asking questions"—was neglected. The method needs auxiliaries. We have pointed out some salient points in the psychology of questioning which affect its proper use. It was not long usage that put the method in an unfavourable light, but rather bad usage of its principles.

"The Catechetical Method, we all know, is not a new one, but, on the contrary, about the most venerable we have. In antedates Christianity. In the earliest Christian schools it was so much used that it gave its name both to teacher and school. Our teachers have been familiar with it from childhood. By it they were themselves taught. It has, in short, been the most commonly used method in our schools, and our successes and failures have been very much bound up with it. . . . Why has it been discarded as a method for most of our present-day subjects? Was it merely because the method was old? Or was it because this simple and ready weapon for teaching had too many shortcomings to make it any longer available? Long usage would not banish it from the schools, rather would it tend to keep it there, for the schools are notoriously conservative. It was the abuse of it, we are constrained to believe, and the neglect of its primary principles, which forced the Catechetical Method into the background and into the disrepute in which it is commonly held."[1]

The presentation of matter in Catechism form—*i.e.*, question and answer—has been much attacked. It is charged against texts written in that manner that they foster mechanical exercises. The child is set to learn the Catechism, and through repetitions the answer and question are associated in his mind. He did not know what the answer meant, neither did he understand the question asked. But he did know that when such a question was asked his answer must be given. The child read in the Catechism that the formula *A* followed the formula *B*. He did not know what

[1] "Methods of Teaching Religion," P. J. McCormick, *C.E.R.*, September, 1918, pp. 99-100.

A meant, but he did know that *B* is the formula he is to pronounce when he hears *A*. Memory is exercised, but no knowledge is gained. He could memorise nonsense syllables equally well.

The abuse of a method does not destroy its use. It may injure its reputation, but that can be justified in time. The newer Catechisms, as the Basilian Catechism, a reformed edition of Dr. Butler's, lead to the question and answer through explanatory paragraphs. *The Text-books of Religion,* by Dr. Yorke, do likewise. The influence of the Munich Method is apparent in this effort to eliminate the danger of parrot repetitions. Dr. Yorke appeals for the retention of the Catechism in the teaching of religion. He argues that the necessity of accurate expression of dogma demands it, and that it is the most serviceable form for parents. "The Catholic respect, therefore, for the form of sound words, and the Catholic distrust for heretical inaccuracy, not mental sluggishness nor fear of progress, is the reason why we have retained the Catechism in religious instruction where it has been abandoned in secular subjects. We must also remember that the duty of teaching Catechism devolves on others, besides priests and teachers. Parents and guardians, and all in charge of children, are bound to teach either personally or by others, and an authoritative elementary manual containing the things to be taught, and cast in form of question and answer, will always be of use and necessity."[1]

The Shields text-books, though not organised in the Catechism fashion of question and answer, use the principle of the method. At the end of each section there is a list of questions. No answers are given. The pupil is sent back through the text to find the answers. The questions are carefully thought out and precisely worded, but the answers of all are in the text.

In educational books this method is coming back because the spirit of it has been rediscovered. To-day we see an increasing use of it in secular subjects—*e.g.*, history, civics,

[1] *Teaching of Religion*, p. 30.

philosophy. The modern manuals on education—*e.g.*, *Foundations of Method*, by Kilpatrick; *Teaching to Think*, by Boraas—add a list of questions after each chapter. The questions are thought-provoking, sending the student back to re-read the chapter with a problem to be solved. That gives the chapter a new and richer content. The student approaches the task in the attitude of research. He has a new point of view for repetition.

The Catechism.

The chief instrument of the Catechetical Method is the Catechism text. The greater part of the editorials and discussion in modern catechetical literature concentrates on the use of the Catechism as a text-book. There has been a mighty din of talk and criticism, and abuse was not missing. For it all, the Catechism has been the common target. Something must be wrong, or we could not expect to hear this song of the Jeremiahs persist so long. Dissatisfaction with the results of religious education is attributed to the inefficiency of the chief instrument. The appeal for another text is growing louder each day. In response, attempts are being made to equip the schools with a better instrument, an ideal Catechism. An analysis of the reasons for the universal discontent with the present text may guide us in the search for the ideal Catechism.

We diagnose the defects of the Catechism in use as natural consequences flowing from two main sources—*i.e.*, (1) the authors of the Catechisms were theologians, they began with definitions, and they employed technical terms; (2) the teachers misused the Catechism by beginning with it, by making it exclusive, and by an over-dose of parrot repetition. We shall follow the analysis with some remarks on the ideal Catechism.

Before entering into this discussion, we should like to emphasise that the Catechism as a pupil's text-book was born of religious controversy, and that it is still a child. Remembering its origin, and realising its youthful age, our judgement should be patient, though just.

Origin of the Catechism as a Text-book.

"The word 'Catechism' as the title of a book explaining the principal Christian doctrines in the form of questions and answers was first used by Luther. It by no means follows, however, that such books did not exist before Luther's time. . . . In Alcuin (735-804)—for he probably was its author, although it has often been attributed to the saintly Bishop Bruno of Würzburg, who died in 1045—we meet for the first time with a manual resembling our modern Catechism: it is a Latin explanation, in questions and answers, of the Creed and the Lord's Prayer."[1]

It is generally admitted that to Luther is due the credit for popularising the Catechism as a text-book for the use of pupils. He borrowed the idea from the traditional method of the Church, and applied it to a text for the child. Catechetical manuals existed before his time, as our citation shows, but they were intended for the teacher, not for the pupil.

"The official Catechism of the Church, issued in answer to the challenge of the Reformers, was not a pupil's text-book, but a teacher's manual. The *Catechismus Romanus* was never intended to be a manual for children or the common people. On the contrary, it is explicitly styled a *Catechismus ad Parochos*, and was primarily designed as a help for pastors and others engaged, whether from free choice or as a matter of duty, in the teaching of the Catechism. It owed its origin to the Council of Trent, but as the Council itself did not publish it, this was done later by order of St Pius V (Rome, 1566), carrying out the Council's directions."[2]

In the sixteenth century, a number of Catechisms flooded Germany, and other countries modelled their Catechisms on them. It is not our province here to trace the evolution of these Catechisms. It is sufficient for our purpose to point out that the Catechism as a text-book for

[1] "The Catechism in History," J. B. Ceulemans, *C.E.R.*, December, 1924, pp. 503-511.

[2] "The Cathechism in History," J. B. Ceulemans, pp. 514-515.

the child came to us in answer to the Catechism issued by Luther. "Let us bear in mind that the Catechism idea—considered as a book to be put in the hands of the laity—is still, as the life of the Church goes, fairly recent; the experiment was born in the era of printing and Protestantism and religious argumentation, and it is still in the early stages."[1]

We suggest that the cause of the discontent with the Catechism is, in the first instance, due to those who wrote it.

1. *Its Authors wrote as Theologians.*

We have seen that the official teacher's Catechism, issued by the Council of Trent, was the *Catechismus ad Parochos*. It was not intended to be a text to place in the hands of children. It was a teacher's manual, synthetising theology for the busy catechist. It was a source book of information on the Church's doctrines, laying emphasis on those that were called in question by the religious revolt. With the wide spread of Luther's Catechism, individual churchmen felt that a text of Catholic doctrine planned on similar lines should be placed in the hands of children. Naturally, they selected as their model the *Catechismus ad Parochos*, and fashioned the text for the child on it. These men were theologians, whose chief interest lay in theology. They approached the problem of a Catechism for children through the subject-matter. Being scientific men, they presented the subject-matter in logical order. Theology begins with a definition. That is a correct procedure for a science. Consequently their Catechism was an admirable compendium of theology and a delight to the theologians, who saw the essence of theology squeezed into such a little book. The authors could point to the *Catechismus ad Parochos* as the model and parent. The child displayed in its form and features a remarkable resemblance to its parent.

"In all forms of her activity the Church keeps in view both the doctrine that is to be taught, whether dogmatic or

[1] *The Sower*, April, 1927, No. 83, Editorial Notes, p. 164.

moral, and *the nature of the minds that are to be instructed.*"[1] The theologians who gave us the Catechism from which all others are descendants in direct line forgot that fundamental principle of the *Ecclesia docens.* They began from the wrong end. They concentrated on their theological treatises, and forgot the child whom they were to teach. As a logical result, the Catechism text so planned has not been an efficient instrument for teaching religion to the child.

Text-books are of two main types: (*a*) *The objective type*, which considers the subject-matter logically, and plans it accordingly. In the teaching of religion, our chief text-book, the Catechism, belongs to this kind. (*b*) *The subjective type* places the child as centre, and arranges the matter so that it will be palatable to the child. It is the psychological approach to the child rather than the logical one of the " objective type." We cannot be efficient catechists unless we are sound educators first. The psychological order has been violated in catechetics more than in any other subject. The other subjects have their courses planned to suit the developing mind of the child. In Christian doctrine many of our children begin and end with the Catechism. It has been a false assumption that the child never grows out of the Catechism stage.

The Catechism begins with Definitions.

The school-books erred in this. The trained mind begins a scientific study in this way, but for the immature mind definitions come last. " We cannot begin where the expert mind stops, the goal cannot be the point of departure."[2]

" It is false teaching to begin with definitions, because the child does not see the concrete facts, of which the definition is the deduction or generalisation. A tirade against all definitions is the error of the reformer."[3]

[1] " Teaching in Parables," E. A. Pace, *C.E.R.*, May, 1913, p. 385.
[2] *How we Think*, John Dewey, p. 62.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 99.

Dewey sounds a wise warning which the catechist should heed. To begin with definitions is wrong. To discard all definitions is equally wrong. We criticise the order of presentation. We do not discredit the value of the presentation in the form of a definition.

"The definition is, as a rule, the last thing arrived at in any subject. When the definition comes, we have the last word on the subject. It is not good pedagogy to give the child first what tends to close the case for him, and this precisely is done if the definitive statement, the sharp and precise definition, is the first and chief thing he has to learn. After that the best avenues of interest are closed."[1]

"We ought to use description instead of definitions bristling with technical terms; most of our definitions leave a blank."[2]

In our experience we have found that compact description is more useful for teaching young children than the best definitions. Even young children can be led to formulate a working definition for themselves. We have set this fruitful exercise to Grade II classes with happy results. In the more advanced classes—*i.e.*, Grades IV to VIII, we have set the additional problem to compare the arrived-at definition with the one given in the Catechism. The concise, accurate, clear-cut expression of the doctrine which the Catechism definition gives is now appreciated as never before, and the child realises the value of such a definition when he compares his effort with the Catechism one. In these grades we have succeeded in having the children make their own Catechisms. The class moves more slowly, but the Catechism is better known, understood, and *loved*. The home-made Catechism creates an interest in the official one that we found difficult to arouse by the traditional way of teaching it.

[1] "Methods of Teaching Religion," P. J. McCormick, *C.E.R.*, September, 1918, p. 102.

[2] *The Catechist in the Infant School*, Lambert Nolle, O.S.B.

The Catechism uses Technical Terms and Formulæ.

In our Catechism texts there are many technical terms and formulæ which puzzle the child. We have already expressed our views on this (*cf.* Comment on the Yorke Method).[1]

The second source of discontent with the Catechism is due to the teachers, who, in many instances, misused the text.

For some years it has been the fashion to blame the Catechism text for all the shortcomings which the teaching of religion is alleged to possess. Our attitude to the Catechism as a text has been made clear. It has not been a satisfactory text-book for children. The teacher is not blameless, however. Many a teacher has done better work with a bad text than with a text which claims to be fool-proof. The text which is presented to teacher and class like a mince-pie—annotations, footnotes, and references minutely digested by the author—causes mental indigestion to both. A mince-pie is swallowed, there is no need for mastication. A predigested text leaves no room for the industry of teacher and class, yet it is in that analysis of the text that education consists.

2. *Beginning with the Catechism.*

The Catechism has been introduced into the infant school. We have listened to children of seven years, preparing for First Communion, uttering the words of the text in faultless fashion—*e.g.*, the terrifying answer: "We should appear very modest and humble in dress, showing in our whole exterior every outward mark of respect and devotion"! The Editor of *The Bombay Examiner*, Father Hull, S.J., is so effective in his demonstration of the futility of beginning the religious education of a child with the Catechism, that we think the article is worth quoting in full:

"On all grounds of psychology, economy, and common sense the formal Catechism is nothing less than a millstone tied round the necks alike of teacher and child. In order to meet elemental needs we must have a free hand as to

[1] *Cf.* pp. 40-42, The Use of Technical Terms.

choice both of matter and of language. The formal Catechism with its official texts and technical forms must be altogether relegated to the future and kept severely out of sight till the first essential grounding has been done.

"When I think of the Catechism as an organ for the first religious education of the child, I am tempted to wring my hands in despair for the radical sanity of the human race. If one wanted to teach a child that a chair has four legs, who in his senses would dream of printing in a book—

Question: How many legs has a chair?
Answer: A chair has four legs—

and telling the child to learn that by heart, and whipping him if he cannot repeat it? Sensible humanity points to a chair and says: 'These are legs. How many are there?' And the child counts and finds four. No one in his senses would make a child learn by heart:

Question: What must you do in order to get to Poona?
Answer: In order to get to Poona you must get to Bori Bunder Station, and take a ticket and get into a train.

He would simply say these things, and some time afterwards take the child to the station and see him off.

"Well, the use of the Catechism as a class book for the young child is about as idiotic as this.

"*The Catechism is an excellent book for reference and for reading up afterwards.* It is an excellent book for the older boys when they have learnt its contents already in all its essential features, and merely want their knowledge systematised. It is an excellent book for the teacher to help himself by, even with the young children. But as a thing to put into the hands of the infant, and make it learn the contents *as the vehicle for getting in religious knowledge*, why, nothing but the proverbial woodenness of the pedagogic mind could ever have conceived such a notion, and nobody but a professional caste hopelessly hide-bound by precedent, and inextricably deep in the grooves of routine, would continue to work by such a method for a moment.

"Apply the same method to teaching a child manners and deportment, and you will soon see its absurdity:

The Practical Method.

"'Now, Tommy, sit straight. Jane, don't eat with your knife. Willy, don't smack your lips, keep your lips closed when you eat.

"'Charley, never look at other people's letters. Henry, wipe your feet on the mat, and don't bring dirt into the house.'

The Catechism Method.

10.0–10.30: Deportment Class:

Question: What is the posture which we should assume while sitting?

Answer: The posture which we should assume while sitting is an upright one.

Question: What is the instrument with which we should not eat?

Answer: The instrument with which we should not eat is called a knife.

Question: For what reason should we not eat with a knife?

Answer: We should not eat with a knife because it induces a danger of cutting the mouth

Question: Mention another fault which should be avoided while eating.

Answer: Another fault which should be avoided while eating is smacking the lips.

Question: What expedient should we adopt in order to avoid smacking our lips?

Answer: The expedient which we should adopt in order to avoid smacking our lips is that of keeping our lips closed all the time while masticating.

Question: What does the word 'masticating' mean?

Answer: The word 'masticating' means the movement of our jaws while chewing food.

Question: What fault should we avoid when handling other people's letters?

Answer: While handling other people's letters we should avoid the fault of showing curiosity regarding them or their contents.

Teacher (*after explaining the long words for half an hour*): 'Now, children, you will learn all these questions by heart for to-morrow.'

(*End of Class.*)

"The one thing which people remember all their lives (if they have been decently looked after at home) is the family manner and deportment. Yet they never had any formal instruction on the subject, never any class, never any text-book, and never any reading or lesson by heart. In fact, that is the reason why they know it all so well.

"On the other hand, the one thing we are always complaining about is that our Catholic adults seem to know nothing of their religion, in spite of so many years of formal instruction, class lessons, reading and explanation of the Catechism and lessons by heart. The fact is, that is just the reason why it is all forgotten.

"A bit of philosophy comes to our rescue. It is contained in the first paragraph of Newman's *Grammar of Assent*. It is the *real apprehension* which sinks into the mind by itself and sticks. It is the *notional apprehension* which remains on the surface of the mind and soon evaporates. The simplest and easiest method is the most efficacious, and that is the method of *real apprehension*. Real apprehensions are conveyed by concrete information through the eye when possible, failing which through the living voice talking about things in terms of common life, with all the freedom of conversation, and with concrete illustrations, and images where possible. You may spend hours in teaching in class about the Stations of the Cross, and it will only be received in a dazed sort of way, and forgotten. But if you take a child in your arms (as I have seen the Irish peasants doing), and carry it to the church, and show it the pictures one by one, the child drinks it all in, and remembers it for life."[1]

Teachers made the Catechism the Exclusive Text.

We think the word "Catechism" has been an obstacle to our progress in Christian doctrine. The word has a bad reputation with us. It stands for uninteresting drudgery for the children and teachers. It seldom rises above the level of hearing lessons. Now, setting lessons and hearing them is not considered teaching in other subjects. It cannot be asked to masquerade as teaching in Christian doctrine. Teaching consists in the preparation and presentation of matter to be learned. It is a co-operative work of teacher with the class, for the class, and by the class. In Christian doctrine we sometimes consider that our work is done when we examine the Catechism lesson. The remaining moments may be used to talk at the class. To get away from

[1] An extract from an article in the *Bombay Examiner*, by Father Hull, S.J.

that injurious association of Catechism and bad teaching, let us in future deny to the word the generic significance it has enjoyed to date. We may call the subject religion, and then Catechism will receive its due place and not tend to usurp the whole field.

Teachers of religion have sinned by making the Catechism an exclusive text. It is the academic "overall" of the school. The "green-immortal" Catechism text is to garb the child from its infant stage to the sprouting stage of adolescence. If the child grows out of it, so much the worse for the child. Commenting on this the Editor of *The Sower* writes: "The learned Bishop of Dijon wrote a pastoral to his clergy in 1922 and said, among other things, 'The results are not commensurate with the labour expended in Christian doctrine. Where, then, is the difficulty? In the children? In the teachers? Allowing for the weaknesses and faults of both, I am convinced that the primary cause of want of success and progress in the all-important work lies in making a *fetish of the Catechism*. Allowing for its excellence as a book, and its value when used at the proper time and in the proper way, yet for the majority of the young and backward children it is an unintelligible and disheartening burden.'

"The Bishop suggests that all religious instructions begin with the Gospel. He writes: 'The Catechism is a lesson; the Gospel is a story.' There is a wealth of understanding of the child mind in that one sentence. Forgetting that the child learns chiefly by impression and imagination, we set him long tasks of memorising and reasoning—giving meat where milk is the proper diet. Let us keep our Catechism by all means—but in its place. Remember the words of St Paul: 'For in Christ Jesus, *by the Gospel, I have begotten you.*' Let the Life and Person of our Lord seize the young and plastic imagination of the child, suffer the little children to come to Him, to learn from Him, not from the *dry* words of a text-book. Follow the lead of the saintly Pius X, in the children's charter on early Communion. Lighten the burden, ease the way, and the results will most certainly

encourage those who take the new way, which is yet the old and the true way."[1]

Parrot Repetition of the Catechism.

Catechists have erred in neglecting to prepare the Catechism before having it memorised by the pupil. The result has been a parrot repetition of sounds without any corresponding meaning. A curious plea has been made for this mechanical exercise. It is claimed for it that the child benefits in later years. This argument is stated by Bishop Bellord: "Even now many are found who urge that the learning of exact formulæ about religion, even if they be quite unintelligible to the learners, is of supreme importance. These words, they say, will remain in the mind steady as a rock through all the storms of life; they will recur to remembrance at length, clothed with the fullness of their meaning, and will become the starting-point for a life of faith, devotion, and virtue. On such grounds as these there has been founded a perverse cult of the dead letter of the Catechism, accompanied sometimes by a total neglect of the spirit which giveth life."[2]

We have heard that same argument advanced by pastors who believed in the total memorising of the Catechism as the chief thing in the teaching of religion. In support of their contention the case is cited of a person who came back to the Church through the flashing across his mind of a formula of the Catechism which he had learned as a child and never understood till then. Had he never memorised the text, he might never have come back to the practice of his faith! We deny the inference. The Catechism words did not bring that man back to the Church. It was the interpretation, through his experience, of the meaning that did it. We suggest a contrary supposition. Had the meaning of the words been associated with the memorising of the words, that person may never have gone astray. When he memorised them as a child his mind gave them some mean-

[1] *The Sower.*

[2] *Religious Education and its Failures*, Bishop Bellord, p. 52.

ing, most probably an erroneous one, which proved a hindrance later on. By this practice are we not depriving the child of the use of one of his most valuable faculties for the time being, by cumbering it with a load which is of no present use to the growing mind? Are we not clogging the intelligence with unassimilable matter? Instead of milk we give him meat, in the hope that he may be able to digest it some years later.

All agree that explanation must precede memorising. The ground is better able to receive the seed when it has been worked over by the plough. The more thorough the preparation the easier the memorising. In religion the child is to memorise understandingly. It has been our experience that the easiest road to the explanation of the Catechism answers has sometimes been through the explanation of the technical terms. The words are isolated, broken up, and translated into ones familiar to the child—*e.g.*, "redeem," "original," "mortal," "purgatory," "inherit," "vicar," etc., are unusual words whose meaning gives the doctrine. To lead the child to see that "redeem" means "to ransom," "buy back," introduces him to the dogma of redemption.

The Ideal Catechism.

The conviction is growing among the teachers of religion that the Catechism text is too important a matter to be left to one author. In the writing of other text-books the scholar and the pedagogue combine forces. In catechetical texts the combination of the theologian and the pedagogue is highly desirable. The Catechism is leaving the ranks of the "objective type" and joining the "subjective type," which makes the child the centre, and suits him. Through pictures, and sustained statement of the dogma, the child reaches the question and answer exposition. Definitions do not begin but end the process. Recourse to explanatory manuals, teachers' aids, and popular compendia of theology is an encouraging feature of the Catechetical Method of to-day. The Catechism is the means of sending children to look up reference books on topics. The Catechism becomes

a reference book for our advanced students, who go back to its precise, accurate statement for a summary of what they have been doing at length in apologetics. Coming back to the text they conned so well, their appreciation of it grows, and they wonder at the many things they missed when they learned it in the grades. We think that the principle which underlies *The Sower* Scheme of religious doctrine is sound. Here the best use is made of the Catechism, so as to leave room for other things.

What is the "Ideal Catechism"?—In the *American Ecclesiastical Review* of April, 1927 (vol. lxxvi), an article entitled "Experiences with the Baltimore Catechism," by an Ex-Superintendent of Schools, appeared. The author made a direct attack on the Baltimore Catechism: "Both its words and its long involved sentences have no meaning for children" (p. 431). The method of using it is also anathema to the writer: "The amount of time and energy squandered upon a task so disagreeable, discouraging, and fruitless is nothing short of a relentless tragedy. And to think all this might be avoided by the simple expedient of selecting a Catechism whose questions and answers children can understand!" (p. 435). The following issues of the review gave much space to the controversy aroused by this open attack. The prevailing tone was a lamentation, and the outlook one of despair.

The Sower of April, 1927, No. 83, accepted the challenge that "the ideal Catechism was an impossibility." In the "Editorial Notes" the characteristics of the ideal Catechism are given, and the argument is that the ideal Catechism is not impossible but feasible and practical.

"The Sower's" Ideal Catechism.—"A Catechism, like every other form of written composition, or indeed any piece of work whatever, needs to have a definite and clear aim, and it is probably for want of this that none of the national or diocesan Catechisms hitherto extant could fairly be called 'ideal.' . . .

"Some people claim that the Catechism should be rewritten in easy child language, or that there should be a special

Catechism for schools, and an extra special one for infant schools in baby talk. Never have we felt able to give any sincere encouragement to such ideas. Children are very important, to be sure, but when it comes to formulating the Divine Revelation in set terms, children must take their chance along with the rest of the Church. Postpone or retard their introduction to the Catechism if you like, but do not try to modify the Catechism for *them*, since the only object of teaching them a Catechism is to help them to share in the corporate life of the Church. . . . The ideal Catechism, in short, would be addressed to the ordinary mixed Catholic congregation, and its compilers would have in mind chiefly its use as a framework and basis of catechetical instruction by parish priests at Sunday Mass. (For *that* is the real ultimate reason why we make even children familiar with the Catechism formulæ—to provide a theological common ground or bridge between priests and people—and the same purpose makes the best goal for a book intended for the instruction of converts and the enlightenment of enquiriers.) So, as regards language, it would try to keep to the ordinary English of the ordinary Englishman, and would avoid as much as possible the technical terms of ecclesiastical learning; and the professional theologians, who take on the whole such a gloomy view of the possibilities of ordinary language, would be allowed to criticise the ideal Catechism as much as they liked, but they would not be allowed to write it. . . .

"As regards the *content* of the ideal Catechism . . . you want something that can be mastered by the children in school, and even learned by heart, without taking up all the available time and boring the children to death, and crowding out other things like plain chant and the Missal and Church History, not to mention preparing for the Sacraments, and so on. . . . In brief, the ideal Catechism might consist of about fifty rather longish and well-packed statements, such as—and even a little longer than—the present answer to 'Why did God make you?' or 'What is a Sacrament?' In order to bring the ideal Catechism down to a manageable

length, it would be necessary to keep it strictly to such doctrinal statements as must be regarded as indispensable to the ordinary layman for the sufficient understanding of his religion. . . . In the ideal Catechism it is likely that the Sacraments and the Liturgy in general—the things that go on in church, in fact—would dominate the presentation, so that the Catechism would mostly take the form of a doctrinal explanation of the Liturgy itself. Action first, then comment; sense impressions first, then intellect—this is the right educational order for children and converts and everybody. The Church follows such a method by a sort of instinct, and the ideal Catechism, when it comes, will not do otherwise. Let us add that the ideal Catechism, although its doctrinal section would be short, would have a prayer supplement containing not only the few prayers now commonly memorised by all Catholics, but also a number of other prayers suitable for general use, and in this way many of the Church's teachings (*e.g.*, the Immaculate Conception or the motives of contrition) could be imparted just as well as, and better than, by formal Catechism answers."[1]

Archbishop Sheehan's Ideal Catechism.—At the desire of the Hierarchy of the Church in Australasia an attempt is being made to present the children with the ideal Catechism. The work has been entrusted to Archbishop Sheehan, D.D., Ph.D., M.A., the Coadjutor Archbishop of Sydney. His Grace has established a reputation already in the field of catechetical authorship, with his widely used *Apologetics* (published by M. H. Gill and Son, Dublin). To aid him in this responsible commission he has recruited the advice, criticisms, and guidance of many well-known teachers in Australia and elsewhere. What he aims at is best seen in an extract from some preliminary notes published in the *Catholic Press* of Sydney, on November 5, 1925, under the title: "The Teaching of the Catechism—Preliminary Notes":

"1. The Catechism approved for our schools, though excellent in matter and arrangement, is unsatisfactory,

[1] *The Sower*, April, 1927, No. 83, pp. 164-166.

because it is not a child's book: (*a*) It is full of the definition fallacy. It asks the child, for instance, 'What is Baptism?' whereas the natural question would be, 'How is Baptism given?' 'What good does it do?' (*b*) In style it is difficult and stilted. (*c*) It is unrelieved by any touch of human colour, and is not calculated to lead the learner to make acts of the love of God. The chief argument of its apologists—viz., that though the child does not understand the scientific definitions, he will understand them when he grows up—contains by implication two false assertions, and is educationally unsound. (For a fuller discussion see the *Catholic Press* of October 29, 1925.)

"2. The book which I am preparing contains sufficient matter for Confirmation.

"3. It is in the form of a conversation between the teacher and the child, the latter for the most part putting the questions, the former answering them. This is necessary in order to give the dialogue a natural and easy tone.

"4. Technical or scientific language is avoided as far as possible.

"5. Each chapter concludes with some prayer, aspiration, or text, to enable the child to gather the fruit of the lesson by means of a religious act.

"6. The text should not be memorised. It will be found that after a few readings the child will grasp the matter quite satisfactorily. The questions by which his knowledge can be tested would not be of the scientific order. The following will serve as examples: 'What great thing does the priest do during Mass?' 'Why do people go to Confession?' 'Who gives the priest the power to take away our sins?' 'Can we get to Heaven without God's help?' 'What is this help called?' The text itself, you will find, will supply you with innumerable questions of this simple character. I must, however, warn you not to use the questions which I ascribe to the child, but those which I ascribe to the teacher. A child's questions, as you know from experience, are often extremely difficult. He expects you to answer them, but has no hope of being able to answer them himself.

"7. The book will be much longer than the ordinary Catechism; this cannot be avoided, chiefly because of the style. Unless expense forbids, it is hoped that we may be able to insert some good sacred pictures in colour.

"8. Generally, the intention is to produce a book of such a kind that parents, even of little education, will read it with

pleasure, and will be induced to help in the great work of instructing the children in their religion. I had this end so much in view that I thought of calling the book *A Bush Catechism*. It would be a great joy to me if I thought I could be of any service to the good fathers and mothers in the lonely homes out back."

In the series of specimen lessons contributed to the *Catholic Press*, Dr. Sheehan has changed from the form of presentation that we have been accustomed to in our Catechisms. In our Catechisms the teacher questions and the pupils answer. In Dr. Sheehan's plan the *Q.* and *A.* become *T.* and *C.*, when *C.* (the child) questions, and *T.* (the teacher) answers. A sustained statement of the doctrine usually prepares the way for the *T.* and *C.* interchange. A prayer always follows the instruction, so that the heart as well as the head of the child is being trained religiously. We add a specimen chapter which his Grace included in his address to the Catholic Teachers' Conference in Sydney.[1]

CHAPTER 19

St John the Baptist.

T. Jesus worked as a carpenter, a poor country carpenter, until He was thirty years old. Then He left the little house where He had spent so many years, and His Mother followed Him.

C. Did He go and live in another house?

T. No. From that time until He died on the Cross, He had no home. Sometimes He stayed with friends, and sometimes He slept in the open air. He had no money except the little that kind people gave Him to buy food.

C. And was He God all the time?

T. Yes.

C. Did He tell the people who He was?

T. Yes. He told them Himself He was the Messias. The Messias, you know, was the One whom God promised to send into the world, to take away Adam's sin and our sins, and to open the gate of Heaven for us. St John the Baptist was the first to tell them.

C. Yes, but who was St John the Baptist?

T. Don't you remember how the Angel Gabriel told our

[1] *The Catholic Press* of Sydney, June 2, 1927, p. 26.

Blessed Lady that her cousin, St Elizabeth, was going to have a child?

C. Yes.

T. That child, when he grew up, was known as St John the Baptist. He told the people to give up their sins and to get ready, because the Messias was coming to them. He used to baptise them by pouring water on them; that was a sign that they wanted to have their sins washed away.

C. Was St John's baptism the same as the priest gives now?

T. No. St John's baptism did not take away sin, but our baptism does.

Prayer.

Dear St John the Baptist, you told the people that Jesus could not help them unless they wanted to get rid of their sins. Pray for me that there may be no sin in my heart, so that Jesus may stay there always. Amen.

T. The Jews knew that St John was to come just before the Messias. The great prophet Isaias told all about them, seven hundred years before it came true.

Dr. Yorke's Ideal Catechism.—Dr. Yorke agrees with the Editor of *The Sower* that the ideal Catechism should be much shorter than the present one: "That book (the Baltimore Catechism) could easily be cut in half, to the great advantage of teacher and pupil alike." He writes: "A Catechism must satisfy two classes of critics, the theologians on the one side and the teachers on the other. The theologians demand scientific accuracy and completeness, while the teachers are looking for brevity and simplicity." He pictures the ideal Catechism as "one that contains the traditional amount of information, in which the definitions are accurately expressed as far as they go, and in which the language is not only correct but rhythmic and elevated."[1]

[1] *Teaching of Religion*, p. 34.

THE SHIELDS METHOD OF TEACHING RELIGION

Introduction.

" His career was a development, slow and painful at first, then rapid and vigorous, a living exemplification of the principles which he applied to educational theory and practice."[1]

Life Sketch.

Thomas Edward Shields was the sixth of a family of eight children. He was born at Mendota, near St Paul, Minnesota, on May 9, 1862. His father, and his ancestors as far back as he could trace them, were well-to-do farmers and pious, practical Catholics.

At the age of six he went to school and remained there, a normal child, until he was nine. At the age of nine he was taken from school and put to work on the farm, " because the teachers said he could learn nothing but vicious habits from the bad boys who attended school."[2] When he was thirteen years old he was sent back to school. " My father was anxious that I should be prepared for Confirmation, and they still entertained a lingering hope that I might learn enough of the ' three R's ' to get along on the farm."[3] This attempt was a failure, and at the end of a few months he returned to work on the farm. From that till he reached his sixteenth year in 1878 he remained the " dull boy " of the family. Through the farm implements which he endeavoured to improve, " the first discernible germ of self-reliance, the

[1] Extract from the panegyric on Dr. Shields delivered at the Catholic University on February 18, 1921, by Right Rev. Monsignor Pace.

[2] *The Making and Unmaking of a Dullard* (his autobiography).

[3] *Ibid.*

dawn of faith in my own mental powers, was produced."[1] His parents gave him a potato patch to pay for the private tuition which he received from an itinerant teacher named Haggerty. The idea of a religious vocation grew upon him. He called on the Bishop and presented himself. The Bishop enquired where he had made his classical studies. "'Classical studies? What are they?' The Bishop hurriedly closed the interview and saw me to the door."[2] His parents must have helped him at this stage, for he entered St Francis College at Milwaukee on September 1, 1882, where he remained for three years. His studies gave him no great difficulty. In 1885 he entered the newly opened Seminary of St Thomas Aquinas at St Paul, and remained there until his ordination to the priesthood on March 14, 1891.

In 1892 he received the degree of Master of Arts at St Mary's Seminary, Baltimore. In October of 1892 he entered the Johns Hopkins University and took up a course of research in biology and physiology which was to prove invaluable for his later career. He received the Doctor's degree in June, 1895, for a thesis entitled, "Effect of Odours and Mental Work on the Blood Flow." He was appointed to St Paul's Seminary in 1895 to organise the biological department, and to equip the laboratory for the study of the natural sciences. During those years he became prominent in educational circles. In 1902 he came to the Catholic University of America as Instructor in Physiological Psychology. He was promoted to the rank of Associate Professor in 1905, and to that of Professor of Psychology and Education in 1909, which chair he occupied until his death in 1921.

Writings.

In 1888 he published his first book. It was a sort of encyclopædic index or filing system in book form, and, like his other inventions, it grew out of his own immediate needs. It was entitled *Index Omnium, being a reference book designed for the use of students and professional men on a plan intended*

[1] *The Making and Unmaking of a Dullard* (his autobiography).
[2] *Ibid.*

to save time and facilitate access to knowledge acquired by reading and study. It never went beyond one small edition.

From 1907 to 1910 he contributed " Notes on Education " to the *Catholic University Bulletin.* Those notes were read with interest by teachers.

In 1907 he published *The Education of Our Girls,* which prepared the way for the establishment of Sisters' College.

In 1911 he founded *The Catholic Educational Review,* which he edited from its first number of January, 1911, until his death. The aim was to turn the minds of teachers towards the University.

In 1911 he organised the Catholic Education Press, which aimed at assisting the schools by providing at a minimum expense the publication of his own volumes, and of the text-books which his colleagues were preparing. His own publications include: *Philosophy of Education, Teachers' Manual of Primary Methods,* The Catholic Education Series.

Educational Activities.

In 1904 he joined the staff of Trinity College, which had been established for the higher education of women. He organised the department of education and for seventeen years assisted in the development of the college by his courses of instruction and his practical suggestions.

In 1911 he began the Summer School, which opened its courses to teachers. He became the first Dean of these courses and occupied that position until his death. The first session of the school was attended by Sisters from all parts of the country. This was sufficient proof of the eagerness of the Sisters to benefit by the facilities which the

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Note.—We use the following abbreviations throughout this Chapter:

C.U.B.=The Catholic University Bulletin, published by the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.

C.E.R.=The Catholic Educational Review, published by the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.

C.E.A.B.=The Catholic Educational Association Bulletin, published at 1651, East Main Street, Columbus, Ohio.

University offered. In answer to that response he established Sisters' College in October of the same year. In 1920 he added a tract of fifty acres to the original purchase, and this was his last financial transaction on a large scale.

In the autumn of 1920 he joined with Mrs. Justine Ward in organising at Sisters' College a School of Music based on the Pius X School of Liturgical Music of New York. The method of teaching music introduced by Mrs. Ward was in accordance with his whole system of education, and he decided to make it a part of the training which he offered the Sisters. His last work before his fatal illness was to lay the foundation of a Hall of Music for the benefit of Sisters' College. On February 15, 1921, he died at his residence in Brookland, D.C., Head of the Department of Education in the Catholic University, and Dean of the Catholic Sisters' College.

Origin of Method.

The causes which led Dr. Shields to formulate a method of teaching religion may be summed up in the dissatisfaction which he felt with current methods. Both the texts in use and the methods of presentation displeased him. Writing in the *Catholic University Bulletin* of 1908, vol. xiv, he says: "Our schools, while contributing their full share to progress in other directions, have made little or no advance in the teaching of the most vital of all subjects. This state of affairs would be deplorable were we to consider both the interests of religion and what its teaching should mean for the moral uplift of our children. But the situation is rendered more grave by the fact that religion, which by its very nature should enter into all departments of the child's growing mind, is thus, through the archaic methods of teaching employed, needlessly isolated from the other subjects of the curriculum, and by the further fact that, by the methods of teaching employed, Christian doctrine is rendered distasteful in comparison with the secular subjects. Beautiful illustrations, coloured pictures, tasteful books, maps, charts, laboratory equipment—everything, in

fact, that appeals to the child's senses and arouses his native activities—are called into requisition in the teaching of secular subjects, whereas the teaching of religion is still carried on in abstract formulations. In the child's mind religion in this way comes to be associated with uninteresting memory drills and three-cent Catechisms" (p. 774).

The growing literature on the subject was an evidence of a growing interest. He mentions the advances made in Germany in the direction of more concrete methods, and in closer conformity to the laws governing mental development. In America improvements were being made. "In a series of Catechisms published by Dr. Yorke of San Francisco there is a decided advance towards better methods. . . . It is true that much remains to be done in the way of further improvement: the songs should come nearer to the comprehension of the child, and the compromise with the old analytical methods might be abandoned with profit to the children."[1]

Dr. Shields was not a mere destructive critic. The prevailing methods were memory drills of the Catechism text. If he hoped to improve the method, he must provide more suitable matter. The series of Catechisms published by Dr. Yorke gave him an inspiration and an example. He was not satisfied with them, and in the ambition of doing better he decided to write his own texts for the teaching of religion. *Religion, First Book*—the first of the Shields text-books—was published in 1908. A second edition appeared in 1917.

Causes of Growth.

As Professor of Education in the Catholic University of America, Dr. Shields had a unique opportunity of advocating his method of teaching religion. In the "Notes on Education" which he contributed monthly to *The Catholic University Bulletin* from 1907 to 1910, he made known his text-books to the Catholic teachers of

[1] *C.U.B.*, 1908, vol. xiv, p. 294.

America and elsewhere. Throughout the 1910 issues of that periodical (vol. xvi), his articles were an apologia for his method. From 1911, when he founded and edited the *Catholic Educational Review*, till his death in 1921, he lost no chance of propagating his views on the teaching of religion. His publications—*Philosophy of Education* in 1917, *Teachers' Manual of Primary Methods* in 1912—created an appreciative public for his text-books on religion. As Dean of Sisters' College, founded by him in 1911, he had a splendid opening to the chief teachers of the Catholic Schools in U.S.A. Since his death the Thomas Edward Shields Memorial School has been established at Brookland, the village adjacent to the University Campus, as an experimental school committed to the testing of his method of teaching religion. The school is part of the Education Department of the Catholic University, directed by one of its professors, and staffed by graduate sisters of that Department. The observation classes for Sisters' College, and for the future superintendents of diocesan schools are conducted there. It is only natural to infer that the Shields Method is made known in its most favourable light in this model school.

During the semester we spent at the Catholic University, we interviewed the Professors of Education and learned that all had accepted the spirit of the Shields Method, while differing in the detailed application of it. All agree that it is worth the fair trial which it is now getting in the model school. The Catholic University is the centre of Catholic education in America. The sisters at Sisters' College will return to supervise the training of others in the various mother houses. The priests enrolled in the Education Department will direct the education of the various dioceses. The future policy in Catholic educational practice lies in the control of these two groups. The priests and the sisters cannot return to their homes unaffected by the Shields barrage from rostrum and school. They in turn will affect the teachers they guide. The good points of the method will be demonstrated in the model school. The defects will

be candidly admitted and the remedial measures carefully explained.

It is not difficult to foresee that the Shields Method is to have a wider application than it has enjoyed to date. Consequently we assume, on these foundations, that the Shields Method of teaching religion promises to be the most representative one in practice in U.S.A., and for that reason it deserves the minute treatment we are endeavouring to give it.

Range of the Method.

Dr. Shields devised his method of teaching religion for the primary grades—*i.e.*, from Grade I to Grade VI. That was his contribution to the scheme formulated by the Catholic University of America. The high school years were to be the work of Dr. Pace, and the college course was left to Dr. Cooper. Two text-books for the college courses have been published by the Catholic Education Press. A companion volume has been issued as an explanation of the content of the texts. The intention of Dr. Cooper is to write two additional texts, and the completed series will consist of:

Religion Outlines for Colleges.

Course I=the Catholic moral ideal.
Course II=dogma, prayer, the Sacraments.
Course III=the Church, the Scriptures, Christ, existence of God.
Course IV=questions of faith.

They are not intended as text-books; their title, *Religion Outlines for Colleges*, intends to indicate that they give suggestions of subjects for study with short outline treatments of the salient points. Though intended mainly for the college student, they may with some adaptations be used in the high school, as the differences between the religious mentality of the last two years of high school and the first two of college are not considerable. The

Outlines have been in use at the Catholic University of America since 1924.

No text-books for the high school years have been published yet. Dr. Pace conducts a series of lectures on the "Teaching of Religion" at the Catholic University, which are largely attended by the students of the Education Department. To Dr. Pace is due more than a passing mention for his part in the Shields Method. In the first four text-books—*First Book, Second Book, Third Reader*, and *Religion, Third Book*—we find the Preface stating: "We take this occasion to express our thanks to Dr. Edward A. Pace for reading the manuscript." It is believed by the faculty of the Catholic University that his services were more valuable than one would judge from this acknowledgement. In the *Catholic Educational Review* advertisements, the four text-books are tabulated as the work of the joint-authorship of Drs. Pace and Shields. That expresses the current impression. In the production of the early texts Dr. Pace co-operated with Dr. Shields in so intimate a manner that he merits the recognition of being a joint-author.

The Ideal of a Religious Education.

To arrive at a correct comprehension of the scope and function of his method, it is necessary that we should understand his views on the relation of religious teaching to education in general. He quotes from a presidential address of M. E. Sadler to the Teachers' Guild of England in 1909: "The idea that education is a fagot of subjects tied together with birch-twigs, out of which you can pull the stick called 'religion,' without any serious loss of kindling for the fire, is an interesting bit of pre-biological psychology. . . . To leave religious influence out of education is to desiccate it. . . . And the French, who are the real authors of secular education, are now trying a rapid succession of new educational religions, turning from Kantian metaphysics to naturalism, and from naturalism to sociology."[1] Dr. Shields

[1] *C.U.B.*, vol. xvi, p. 154.

accepts that exposition of his view. Religion is not to be an "extra," an "appendage unassimilated with that to which it is joined." To accomplish this aim the religious readers are essential to his method. "Religion must be present in the school as the central and unifying element of all teaching: it must appear in the primary reader, not in isolated and unconnected sketches, but as the central theme to which everything in the book is related."[1] In Dr. Shields' time there grew up the conviction that Catholic schools should have Catholic readers. To meet the demand some publishers approached Catholic teachers and asked them to "Catholicise" the secular readers in use in the schools. This was done by sprinkling them with some pious pictures and hymns. At the time there were no others available, and the pious pictures were sufficient disguise to enable the secular reader to maintain its place in the Catholic schools. Dr. Shields revolted against that insult to Catholic teachers, and in order to banish the diluted secular text he wrote his readers, "to make the religious element the central, co-ordinating, and dominating element of the work of the child's first years in school. It must grow out of the book and be the very heart of it."[2] "The readers bear the name 'Religion' on their title-page, not because they are devoted wholly to religion, but because religion is the central, organising element, which unifies the content, and in which the familiar phenomena of the child's life and environment are presented in their relationship to God and to the Christian religion."[3] A religious education is the ideal he seeks. That is his first principle.

Sources of the Shields Method.

In the autobiographical volume entitled *The Making and Unmaking of a Dullard*, Dr. Shields has left us a vivid picture of his childhood and youth. The book is the best guide to his philosophy of education, because his unique experiences recorded in it are the mine from which he draws

[1] *C.U.B.*, vol. xvi, 1910, p. 153. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 154.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 154.

his principles. He was one of those children whom mistaken methods and misunderstanding of teachers have made a victim.

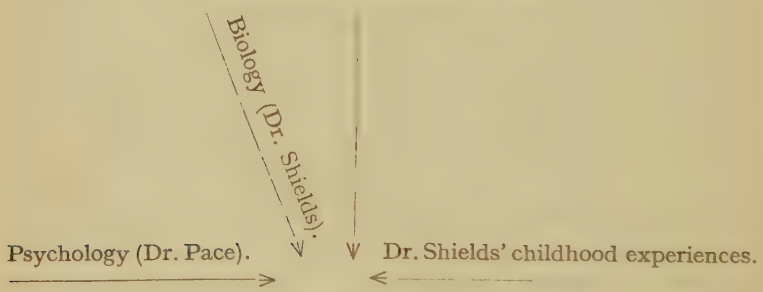
From his ninth to his sixteenth year, school and home united to convince him that he was a dullard, and he heard it so frequently that he had consigned himself to mental darkness. The book portrays the steps along which he painfully climbed the mount of self-reliance, and gained the summit of self-confidence in his own mental powers. He wrote that intimate human document to save others from a similar fate. On the facts of his childhood's struggle, from "the sentence of condemnation which crushed me utterly, from which I slunk away like a wounded animal to hide myself in the cornfield," to the day when the dullard awakes through tasting the sweetness of success, are based much of his educational work in later years.

Dr. Shields had little experience in teaching. What teaching he did was confined to advanced secondary work. But he had a unique experience as a child, and on an analysis of that he arrived at the principles which should guide others. His teaching practice in elementary schools was his own bitter story. He meditated on the causes which kept him a failure until he was sixteen years old, and concluded that sound method must avoid them.

Dr. Shields devoted his academic training at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, U.S.A., to biology. He was fundamentally a biologist. His early teaching was devoted to that subject. That science influences his whole outlook as an educator. Reflecting on his own unhappy experiences as a child, his interest in education was kindled, and the spark was fanned into a flame as the years went on. His educational philosophy is arrived at through biology. His argument is by analogy. If such is the case with the living plant, the same is true of the living child. How far can one press that argument from analogy? Of course, most of our knowledge of God comes from analogy: "The heavens show forth the glory of God," is the Psalmist's justification.

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION.

Dr. Shields claimed that he was following the method employed by Christ, the first Catechist. During his lifetime he objected to the use of the term "The Shields Method," insisting that he advocated a spirit and not a technique. The name has remained, however, and for our purposes it is convenient for us to accept it. While we call it by this name, we recognise the valuable co-operation of Rev. Dr. Pace, the Professor of Philosophy at the Catholic University of America. Both reach the same conclusions from very different starting-points. Dr. Pace came to advocate the principles of the Shields Method from psychology, whereas Dr. Shields came through biology. We might illustrate the sources of the method by a diagram.



THE SHIELDS METHOD.

Both Drs. Shields and Pace look to Christ as their Model Teacher, and their aim is to follow His method. In a series of articles contributed to the *Catholic Educational Review*, Dr. Pace makes known his views. We draw from three especially in these pages: "How Christ Taught Religion" (*C.E.R.*, October, 1926), "Teaching in Parables" (*C.E.R.*, May, 1913), and "Modern Psychology and Catholic Education" (*The Catholic World*, September, 1905).

We take this opportunity to acknowledge the considerable help that Dr. Pace gave us in his lectures on "Teaching of

Religion," which we attended at the Catholic University of America from January to June (1927).

From this triple source—the inspiration of " the parable method " of Christ, the meditation on childhood experience, and the scientific study of biology—there flow certain principles on which the Shields Method rests. We shall deal briefly with them.

I. Build from Within.

The " temple of life and mind can be built by none other than by the inward dweller."[1]

He makes a distinction between growth and development. " The growth of the body continues long after its development has practically ceased, and the same may be said of the mind."[2]

He insists that the source of mental growth and development is from within. The teacher and school are the environment providing the necessary care and food. " An insect's egg, for example, first becomes a grub, the grub is then converted into a pupa, from which it finally emerges as a moth. Similarly, every frog must pass through the tadpole stage. Life does not build its final structures directly. The final stage of every living organism is attained through a longer or shorter series of reconstructions. And what is true of the temple of life is equally true of the dweller within the temple."[3]

Comment.—How does growth take place in any form of organic life ? Watch a plant growing. There is a continual putting forth of life from within the plant. It is the life-giving sap that supplies life and growth. If we wish a plant to grow higher, we dig round it, adding manure and water. The plant assimilates what helps to enrich its life. It exercises a judicious selection: some qualities are taken,

[1] *Philosophy of Education*, T. E. Shields, p. 111.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 130.

[3] " Method of Teaching Religion," an address by T. E. Shields before the Catholic Educational Association at Cincinnati, 1908, *C.E.A.B.*, 1908.

others rejected, and others ejected as excreta to make room for more. We do not rely on external pressure to secure an extra foot in the height of a plant, we do not pull it up or splice another branch to it. Growth of living things is characterised by an aptitude for assimilation, and to be assimilated. The living growth is flexible. We sometimes speak inaccurately of houses and buildings growing. This is a mere adding on of layer upon layer. The materials added must be fixed, rigid. The bricks of the rising house cannot be flexible or the house collapses. Each layer rests on another, and between them we put mortar to hold them right there. Each layer is sufficient for itself, it contributes nothing to the layer above or below it. It would never assimilate or be assimilated by another layer. The stones of the house are in contact, but distinct from each other, otherwise the building would never rise. The material, be it brick or stone, comes from without, from the kiln or quarry. They are added one on top of the other. There is no contribution of one layer to another. Natural growth is from within. Each stage carries on growth to the other. What comes from without in the form of manure or nurture is assimilated like food, and that is the mark of a living thing.

So with growth in the child. Food is taken into the tissue of the organism so as to develop it. It becomes a part of the inmost substance of the child. If it is to nourish, it must not be merely swallowed. It must, through mastication and digestion, become part of the substance of the child. It is a dangerous thing to swallow substances that lie in the stomach undigested and unassimilated. That form of feeding does more harm than good. Physical indigestion is a bad thing, but mental indigestion is worse. Consequently it is a fallacy to swallow truth mentally through mere memorising. It lies there isolated, unassociated, unusable. If you gorge a child with food, you may succeed in making him eat, but you also make him sick. To cram a child's brain is to give it mental indigestion.

This principle of Dr. Shields will colour all his work as

a teacher. Herbart approached the child from without, because he denied the existence of a soul. Dr. Shields justifies his break away from " the old analytical methods " on this point. In the teaching of religion there is to be no plastering from outside, the growth is to be from within " the temple of the mind."

II. Slow Beginnings, Rapid Growth.

He claims that the child, guided by his method, will advance rapidly even though the beginnings are slow. " In all organic growth, as in the growth of crystals, the energy expended is released within the growing structure, hence each molecule that is added to the living tissue remains an active agent thereafter in the incorporation of all subsequent molecules. In this type of growth beginnings may be infinitesimal, but the small beginnings are more than compensated for by the fact that growth proceeds in a geometrical ratio. If this truth is clearly realised by the teacher, it will make him patient with the slowness of the process in the early days of mental growth, and it should lead him into an understanding of the fact that the adaptability of the truth which he presents to the mind of the child is of much greater consequence than the quantity of truth which the child assimilates."[1]

Comment.—Dr. Shields argues, by analogy from biology, if you add from without you get additions in arithmetical ratio, if you build from within you get growth in geometrical ratio. The danger for the educator is that he may be deceived in evaluating the degree of advancement in the early years of a child's school-days. One readily sees the result of adding on from without. It can be measured in bulk. With growth it is not easy to detect the early advances. In the early stages we do not see any perceptible advance in the child who builds from within. The child seems to remain in the same stage for a considerable time, and then suddenly blossoms forth at a geometrical ratio far surpassing the other who adds from without.

[1] *Philosophy of Education*, T. E. Shields, p. 112.

"The Kingdom of God is within you"—we cannot expect to see results and mark the progress of the child externally. "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed"—give the seed time, and it will become a mighty tree. "The kingdom of the mind and heart can only be built by the inward dweller," is the Shields application of these maxims to education. The danger we are to guard against is impatience. We are in too much of a hurry, wanting to see results, forgetting that education is a growth, a slow process that will bear fruit not so much in school as in life.

III. Education plants Germinal Seeds.

"The content of the child mind should enfold in germinal form the entire content of the man's consciousness, just as the seed of the plant contains potentially and in germinal form the full-grown plant, root and stem, branch and leaf, and petal and ripened fruit. In the case of the plant this complexity of adult structure implicitly enfolded in the seed is inherited from the parent plant, whereas, in the case of the child's consciousness, the germ of the future mental content must be planted by the teacher. . . . All the elements of a complete education must be contained potentially and in germinal form in the education that is given to the child during his first years in school."[1]

He applies this principle in the *First Book* of his series. In the Preface (page 3) he makes the claim: "The Book is intended to be the only book to be put into the child's hands during the first year of his school life, hence its content will be found to embrace the germinal concepts of all that is to be taught by the aid of advanced and complex curricula in the higher grades and in the higher institutions of learning."

Dr. Shields claims to follow the example of Christ the Catechist as his model here: "Christ presented all His lessons so that they might be assimilated and rendered functional by His hearers in the measure of their capacity.

[1] "Notes on Education," by Dr. Shields, *C.U.B.*, 1908, vol. xiv, pp. 776, 780.

Synopses and abstract formulations He left to other teachers. His truths were all germinal, possessing within themselves the potency and promise of life and fruit. He was always careful to prepare the minds of His hearers before planting in them the germs of divine truth. In this, as in other things, the catechist should follow His example."[1]

Comment.—Dr. Shields seeks a curriculum in the First Grade that will hold the essentials of the Catholic Faith contained in a tiny seed, out of which all subsequent matter will grow. The germinal idea is to be a big one. He would express it not as theological formulæ, but in concrete presentations. He aims to present ideas to the child which will function here and now. The subject-matter is to affect their lives. One may not be able to see the effect, but the ideas will do their work. Therefore, at the beginning, few ideas are presented—other things must wait. Out of these seeds, which mean something to the child of the First Grade, will grow big trees. But the seed does not germinate until it ripens, and consequently the educator must be patient.

The essential element of curriculum construction is that of expansion on the principle of development. It is not a mere adding on. The germinal ideas come first, and the others gradually grow out of them. Religion is not to be presented as a procession of chapters, as is largely done in our current Catechisms. One chapter of the Catechism follows another as layer upon layer of a building. The better way is that the germs are given at the beginning, and there is a spiral flowering of those germinal ideas. The matter and teaching will continually rise to higher levels, but at any given point a vertical line should go down to the germinal idea presented in the beginning stage.[2]

Dr. Shields is right in the principle that is to guide him in organising his curriculum in religion. Unity and progress

[1] "Notes on Education," by Dr. Shields, *C.U.B.*, 1908, vol. xiv, p. 780.

[2] "Method of Teaching Religion," T. E. Shields, *C.E.A.B.*, vol. v, 1908, p. 206.

are seen in natural growth. Among the marks of the Church are unity and harmony; they ought to appear in the method and sequence of teaching religion. That unity of knowledge will grow up in the mind of the child, and will lead him to see how natural it is for the Church to claim that distinguishing mark of "unity." Yet it is not a static type of unity, it moves along. Dr. Shields writes in the Preface to *First Book*: "Great care has been exercised to secure unity of thought and its progressive development throughout the book."

We might summarise the principles of curriculum construction in catechetics that have been in use under three headings: (1) Child goes from first chapter to the last in the Catechism and swallows its contents. With equal success and intelligence the child could reverse the order, and go from last chapter to first. (2) The Catechism is divided up into so many chapters for each grade. This saves the child from the monotonous repetition year by year of the same text. This plan has served its purpose in many ways. From this practice grew the demand for more than one text. Accordingly a series of Catechisms were used in the order of their difficulty. (3) A compromise was effected. The Catechism became the basis of instruction, and from it the teacher expands according to her knowledge, throwing in life and colour by illustrations and stories. Bible History becomes an integral part of the instruction.

These plans have the merit of zeal. Dr. Shields applies to them his standard of curriculum construction, and finds them defective. He breaks completely with current practice. The Catechism is no longer the text. The readers are to take its place. The Catechetical Method aims at imparting a knowledge of dogmatic truth by means of the Catechism text. Dr. Shields goes deeper and proposes to face the problem: "How can I lead the child to think on these truths? How can I equip him with a knowledge that will be intelligent and vital for his conduct as a Christian?" It is in the solution of that problem that Dr. Shields contributes a new method to catechetics.

IV. The Five Fundamental Instincts.

"The first strongly marked instincts to appear in the human infant are those which determine his attitude towards his parents, and among these, five stand out conspicuously. In obedience to these instincts, the infant turns to his parents for love, for food, for protection, for remedy, and for models on which to form his conduct. And in these same instincts the attitude of the Christian towards God is foreshadowed. No matter how highly developed he may be in mind and in heart, no matter how richly endowed he may be with grace and virtue, he still turns to his Heavenly Father as the unfailing source of all that he desires. In Him he finds the highest embodiment of parental love, to Him he turns for protection against all danger, in Him he finds his last resource in the hour of suffering, and he ever looks towards Him as the model that is to orientate all his activities. To the very end his prayer remains: 'Our Father, who art in Heaven, give us this day our daily bread, lead us not into temptation, deliver us from evil.'"[1]

Dr. Shields claims Christ as his model in building on instincts.

"Religious truths cannot be comprehended at all unless they are approached in the right way, and in this right way the Master Teacher must be our guide. In teaching the sublime truths of religion He always appealed directly to the instincts, to the experience, and to the imagination of His disciples, and through these means He sought to lead them into an understanding of the saving truths which He announced to them."[2]

Dr. Shields makes the child the centre. In this he also follows Christ, who adapted His lessons to the minds and interests of His hearers. In each grade the child, *hic et nunc*, is to be catered for. The organisation of materials and its presentation by the teacher is to be guided by the child's mental status.

[1] "Method of Teaching Religion," T. E. Shields, p. 221.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 205.

"The psychological sequence is, therefore, the only possible sequence in the presentation of truth to the young and to the undeveloped. Not what was first in time nor what is logically the basis of the body of truth to be imparted, but what the child needs *now* for his unfolding mental life and what he can comprehend *now* in the light of his own past, must be presented, if it is to serve as food to his growing mind. When I was a child I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child. But when I became a man I put away the things of a child."[1]

He examines the child through a biological lens and diagnoses the five fundamental instincts. On these the educator has to build. The teacher of religion has a double task to perform. He has to present subject-matter to the child that will satisfy these five instincts. He is, then, to seize hold of these natural instincts and spiritualise them. "Clearly, therefore, the first and the most important work in the teaching of religion, especially in the teaching of religion to young children, is that which is concerned with (1) the cultivation of the instincts, and with (2) the lifting of them into Christian virtues."[2]

1. *The Cultivation of the Instincts.*—The first duty of the teacher of religion is to satisfy these needs. The child comes to school hungry in these needs. He wants them satisfied. Nature clamours for love, for food, for protection, for remedy, and for a model. They are physical needs. Dr. Shields looks into the history of the race and seeks what has been done to fulfil these needs of the child. He divides the experiences of the world into five departments. These form man's social inheritance. They are the sum-total of human experience in which these needs can be satisfied. These are catalogued accordingly: Religion, Science, Human Institutions, Letters, Æsthetics. These make up the social inheritance of the child. The educator shows the child, by experience, that through these social five we are really satisfying the other physical five.

[1] "Method of Teaching Religion," T. E. Shields, p. 208. (Italics are ours.)

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 220.

2. *The Spiritualising of the Instincts.*—The teacher's second task is to lift up these instincts from the natural to the supernatural plane. They are selfish in the child, all self-regarding, because of nature's insistence on self-preservation as the primary law. The problem of religious education is: How can these needs be transformed, spiritualised, so that the child will give love instead of demanding it, will give food instead of taking it—in short, that he does not want for himself, but wants to give ? The aim of Christian education is the transformation of selfishness into giving for the highest motive, the love of God. This is the perfection of the Christian life. Dr. Shields points out that the means of doing this is through experiences given the child while at school.

The teacher's chief work in the first few years of school is to capture the instincts of the child, turn them away from their evil propensities, and thereby give them active direction. She cannot afford to wait until they are warped. The teacher who reassures herself that training will come later with better effect, forgets that neither the growth of the child nor the activity of the devil will wait. Lay the foundation with the capital which you find in the child. " Upon these native roots must be engrafted the corresponding Christian virtues," admonishes Dr. Shields in the Preface to *First Book.* Do not let that capital go to waste or allow the devil to pervert it. It takes a herculean effort to bring the child back once he has got a wrong start. The early impressions are more lasting with a child, and consequently there must be more care and attention given to the first year than all the others put together.

The teacher has the switch lever in her hand which is to direct the train. If she switches the wrong lever, the train goes in the wrong direction, and it takes a lot of time and worry to bring it back on the correct course. If the train is put on the right track, it may have to do many thousands of miles, but it does not matter how slowly it moves, it is always moving in the right direction, and it will never have to retrace its tracks. So with the child that is started properly.

How is this double duty to be accomplished by the teacher? Dr. Shields supplies the means in the series of text-books on religion, which aims at providing the child with such knowledge that each of these instincts is satisfied, and that each is directed through training to the fulfilment of its proper object.

The *First Book* of the Catholic Education Series appeals primarily to the instincts of the child. Dr. Shields writes in its Preface: "The book is divided into five parts, each one of which deals with one of the great instincts that determine the child's relationship of dependence upon his parents, and aims at transforming the instinct so as to render it a suitable element in the formation of Christian character. The child is born into the world dependent upon his parents for love, for nourishment, for protection, for remedy, and for imitative models. In each of these the instinctive attitude of the child is purely selfish. Upon these native roots must be engrafted the corresponding Christian virtues, which lift the dependence from our earthly to our Heavenly Father, and replace the selfish by a corresponding unselfish motive. In the first part the child is led to realise and count upon his Heavenly Father's love, and he is taught that there is greater joy in loving than in being loved. And in the subsequent lessons he is taught that it is better to give than to take, and that the only sure reliance is that which rests upon his Heavenly Father."[1]

Dr. Shields' contribution to Catechetical Methods is the attempt to build his first lessons in religion upon the child's instincts. That is the new idea which we attribute to him. In many of his suggestions he but follows what others have reformed, but in this one idea, the pivotal point in his method, he is a pioneer.

We may question him and ask, Are these five needs fundamental? Are they exhaustive? Do they omit anything? To avoid controversy it is better to call them needs, inborn needs. The psychology and biology of to-day would question many of his terms, meanings, and theories. An

[1] Preface, p. 4.

educational commentator in the *American Ecclesiastical Review* says: "While no part of the child's mental make-up should be neglected in education, it does not seem quite clear why instincts, blind and rigid instincts, should be so much insisted upon. Surely, instincts are a heritage, but not particularly of childhood; they accompany us through life. Reason, will, memory, emotions, also demand their cultivation in the early school years—of course, appropriate cultivation. Even in cultivating instincts explicitly we are making very good use of reason and will. Perhaps Dr. Shields unduly emphasises instincts."[1]

Comment.—Modern psychology would not accept this classification of fundamental instincts. We think Dr. Shields has widened a definite idea. Instinct means something innate, purposeful, active. We prefer to call them needs. The Columbia school of educational thought enumerates needs akin to those five of Dr. Shields—viz., food, shelter, clothing, transportation, records. The aim of education is based on those fundamental industrial needs. The child, according to this view, must see how those needs are satisfied. The approach to all subjects will be through those needs, how they are provided for.

Dr. Shields rightly stresses the importance of the beginning stages in the religious formation of the child. All the great educationalists from Plato and Quintilian down to our time have realised the value of the principle of "catching them young," as Plato aptly puts it: "Right training in the nursery is the most important part of education" (*Laws*, ii, 643). Quintilian held the same faith when he proposed that the training of the orator must begin in the cradle ("ab infantia formare"). This is particularly true in religious education. "Man remains in the same religious disposition as he was when he was six years old, as a rule," is the judgement of Bishop Kettller.

Dr. Shields is psychologically sound in beginning with the child. "The being to be educated must rule the educa-

[1] "Dr. Shields' Catechetical Method," December, 1908, vol. xxxix, p. 706.

tional process." "Quidquid recipitur recipitur per modum recipientis" is the teaching of the school-men.

Professor Adams reaffirms the modern emphasis on the study of the child by the teacher, in a happy manner: "Verbs of teaching govern two accusatives: one of the person, another of the thing. The essential difference between the old and new teaching lies in the incidence of effort on these two accusatives. The old teachers laid most of the stress on Latin, the new lay it on John. In both cases it is probable that the teacher still drives his team tandem, though of old Latin came first, while John was kept in the background where, incidentally, he was more accessible to the whip. In these days John is brought into a position of prominence, and certainly gets his full share of the teacher's attention."[1]

Dr. Shields must have been influenced largely by Froebel. In the metaphors he uses, when, *e.g.*, he speaks of "nourishment, assimilation, growth," and of the child as "a growing plant, a flower unfolding itself," he closely resembles Comenius, the national model for the educators of Germany. Comenius made the nature of the child the centre of the educator's attention. He was constantly drawing parallels between plant life and child life. His influence to-day is due to those biological illustrations of his psychological order, because they appeal to modern psychologists. Copy the plant was his creed. Watch it growing was his advice. As the plant wants pruning in order that it may grow properly, so the natural growth in education must be controlled and perfected by human art. Our attitude as educators must not be that of masters but of servants, ministering patiently to nature in order that we may draw sweetly from it what we want. But even a servant wants an intelligent grasp of the situation, and also an intelligent method, if his work is to be done well. The question of education becomes: In what way are we to serve nature in its different stages, in order to secure our desired result? In short, the subject-

[1] *Modern Developments in Educational Practice*, John Adams (University of London Press, 1922), p. 12.

matter and the method of presentation must be planned to suit the developing mind. We are to watch the steps in the child's natural expression, and through them see the nature of the child unfolding itself, and to that natural process we are to adjust our methods. "God made them, and if we take the trouble to notice after what manner He has made them, we shall know how He intends them to be treated, and if we treat them accordingly we shall be able to count more on His co-operation, as well as theirs."[1] God has fashioned a religion to suit the child He has created. Therefore, our first duty is to know the child, and from our storehouse of faith to pick and choose to suit him as he grows. We are to teach the child in a childlike manner ("puer pueriliter") St Augustine admonishes us. And St Paul confirms the wisdom of the biologist: "I gave you milk to drink, not meat, for you were not able as yet."[2]

The Shields Technique.

Looking into his own life as a child, Dr. Shields meditated on that unique experience which saw him rise from being the dunce of the family to become its chief pride. His schooling from the sixth to the ninth year was not a success. The prevailing method of instruction was recitation, a rote memory was the way to success. He failed in that, and was taken from the school because the teachers could do nothing for him. With the zeal of a reformer, he turned from memorising and built the hope of the future on thought context. His readers are factual, giving the child something to exercise his mind on. Ideas are functional, they lead to self-activity. An idea tends to express itself. "In fact, recent psychological theory asserts that it is only in the act of expression that a perceived truth becomes vital."[3] He claims for his readers that "they present content of absorbing interest to the child."

Dr. Shields had no experience as a teacher in the primary

[1] *The Givers*, F. H. Drinkwater, p. 165.
[2] 1 Cor. iii 2.
[3] "Notes on Education, 1908," *C.U.B.*, vol. xiv, p. 783.

schools. He died before the details of his method had been tried satisfactorily. The technique he fashioned was not the result of practice and observation, but the product of introspection. In the *Making and Unmaking of a Dullard*, he tells us his own life story, and in it we can easily see the foundations of the faith he strongly held in his technique of class-teaching. We see therein the reason for the belief in ideas as the proper mental food for the children of First Grade upwards, for the insistence that doing helps thinking, and that ideas lead to action, for the advantages of the Gospel of encouragement in school life, and for the advocacy of the *Context Method* of reading which made the content attitude possible.

As a teacher of religion his chief aim is to give ideas. Those ideas will be served to the child in a series of textbooks. He hopes to set the pupils thinking on religion through doing things. His efforts to improve the grindstone in the farm shed, and the grubbing machine in the paddock, shook the " dullard " and made him think. His technique employs fully the various forms of self-activity. He argues: " Experience shows us that impression is vague and lifeless until it is dowered into life as it issues in expression."[1] He classifies the activities of the child into " seven forms of expression—viz., the unorganised play of the child, his constructive activities, his dramatisations, music, art, spoken and written language. . . . In the First Grade emphasis falls chiefly on the early part of the series, and as the child passes into youth emphasis falls on the later members of the series."[2]

Projects are the avenues along which ideas are to express themselves. He stresses the necessity of directing the children's thoughts while they are carrying out the projects. Actions of themselves do not help thinking. The project will be helpful in fostering thought, if the idea behind the work is realised, and frequently brought before the children

[1] " Primary Methods," Dr. Shields, *C.E.R.*, September, 1918, vol. xvi, pp. 139-145.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 140.

during its execution. Again, he insists that the problem occasioned by the project must be the child's own, not the teacher's. He hopes, by the project and expression activities, to keep the religious teaching in touch with the real life of the child, making his religion vital for him, never divorcing it from life; something real to think about, something real to do.

Encouragement.

The gospel of encouragement is frequently on his lips, when Dr. Shields speaks to teachers in his Education Notes. From Grade I to Grade VIII children are given things to do, and through the doing of them the child receives the spur to do better. Dr. Shields experienced that lack of a comforting pat on the back during the anxious years which intervened between his awakening at his sixteenth year—" when the first ray of hope penetrated the gloom of discouragement in which I lived "[1]—and his conviction that he had brains. Had someone been nigh to cheer him on, how much more hopeful of success he would have been. He writes: " Some means of self-reliance, some little confidence in my own mental powers, was my one great need at the time, and this I finally attained through mastery of the simple machinery with which I worked."[2] The light that illuminated the mental darkness, which overclouded his youth, came to him through doing things. This philosophy is applied in his method of using the texts on religion. The children are to express the thoughts of the texts through the medium of the plastic arts, sand-trays, manual work, drawing, painting, modelling in clay, dramatisation, all which activities are summed up in the large place he gave to the Action Method. Reinforced self-respect is the great need in our schools. Our methods must aim at convincing the ordinary child that, with the gifts with which God has endowed him, very presentable work can be done by him in the world. We can inculcate that doctrine of self-respect in the child by

[1] *The Making and Unmaking of a Dullard.*
[2] *Ibid.*

allowing him to do things, and to taste the sweetness of achievement, which is the reward and inspiration of the artist.

Modern Writers' Support.

That gospel of encouragement, which Dr. Shields accepted through meditating on his own life, is receiving more attention to-day than formerly. "Encouragement, then, is the biggest part of education. Your business as a teacher is to give your pupils the experience of success. If you are playing a catching game with little children, you must take care to let yourself get caught now and then, else they will lose interest—they will discover they are attempting the impossible. . . . If there are children who have no success in the ordinary things, it is your business to find something that they *can* succeed at; for unless they have felt the encouragement of success in something or other, they will never awaken to full life. The worst tragedy of the school system, bequeathed to us by the bad old days, is that there are thousands of children who have to sit in overcrowded classes until they are fourteen, engaged on the hopeless tasks which are decreed to be necessary, having the sense of their complete failure and stupidity burned into them deeper and deeper every day, when all the time they possess wonderful powers of soul and body that would flower and flourish in a more encouraging environment."[1]

The Context Method of Reading.

Dr. Shields agrees with Plato that the "beginning is the chiefest thing in education." Progress must be slow at first because it is building from within. Like growth in plants it is imperceptible, until finally it advances in geometrical ratio. The first text-book must supply germinal seeds from which all future lessons sprout. The first text-book satisfies the five needs of the child. The use of the texts by the child is therefore an essential part of the Shields

[1] *The Givers*, F. H. Drinkwater, p. 5.

Method. The child of six must be able to read the *First Book* if the method is to succeed, because the child is to gather the ideas from the text. Dr. Shields hopes to meet that difficulty through the *Context Method of Reading*. He abhorred the method of teaching reading through phonetics. His experience as a "dullard" suggested the other technique as the solution of the problem that the child of six must be able to read. He tells us that a felt need sent him to learn reading in his sixteenth year. In his brief school-days the reading had been entirely for form and not for content, and had left him with a deep-rooted distaste for books. Interest in an unfinished story, which his brother had been reading aloud for the family, drove him to get the book and spell it out for himself, studying each letter and pronouncing each syllable. "My progress was slow, but I managed to finish the story. It was reading for content and not for form, and, in this respect, it was a germ of mental life that was destined to have a large and vigorous growth. . . . My bungling attempts to read without the aid of a teacher at the age of sixteen, as I lay on the hay-mow and pondered each syllable in turn, had in them something infinitely better than could have been produced by the best achievements along the old lines, where the form replaced the substance in the focus of attention."[1]

The "Context Method of Reading" failed in practice, as we shall point out later on. Dr. Shields gives a detailed account of the method in one of his articles in the *Catholic Education Review*.[2]

The Catholic Education Series.

American schools are text-book schools. Dr. Shields is in harmony with the national outlook in making his method of teaching religion a text-book one. We have endeavoured to trace that method back to its sources. We now come to examine the translation of those principles into practice.

[1] *The Making and Unmaking of a Dullard.*

[2] "The Context Method of Reading," T. E. Shields, *C.E.R.*, February, 1911, vol. i, No. 2, pp. 146-154.

The expression of that method will be found in the text-books known as "The Catholic Education Series," written by Dr. Shields and prescribed as *sine-qua-non* instruments in the teaching of religion. The series in the order of their presentation are as follows: *First Book; Second Book; Third Reader; Religion, Third Book; Fourth Reader; Religion, Fourth Book;* and *Fifth Reader.*

We shall examine the *First Book* carefully, because if he fails in this, his method receives a serious set-back. The others may be passed over quickly.

First Book.

(1) *The Sequence.*—Dr. Shields outlines the sequence of the contents: "On examination it will be found that each part of the book is cast in the essential lines of the parable. It begins with a nature study which is valuable in itself as a germinal element in the future scientific education of the child, but the chief value of the nature study at this stage of the child's education is to be found in its function as the basis of the parable in which the child is led into an understanding of the more intimate truths of his own life and of his relationship with God. The nature study is followed by a domestic study, which is reflected in and grows out of the nature study. The nature study is intended to be dramatised by the children. The domestic study presents lessons to be lived out in the home. The nature study will be found to deepen the child's comprehension of his home duties, and to develop a keener appreciation of the privileges, and a more sympathetic attitude. Both the nature study and the domestic study are constructed in such a manner as to form an adequate preparation for the religious lesson which follows. The fourth element in each of the parts is represented by two songs."[1]

(2) *The Five Instincts Plan.*—The content of the book is based on the five fundamental instincts of the child—viz., love, food, protection, remedy, and imitation. The book opens with a nature study, "Looking for Breakfast":

[1] Preface, pp. 5 and 6.

the parent robins are on the grass looking for food because of their love for their young. The building of a nest is described because the parents want to protect their young. But the nest of mother's arms is a safer refuge, and daddy's knee is more delightful than any nest. Jesus loves little children; watch Him sitting under the tree and the children playing around Him. Listen to what He says to them; it is a beautiful prayer which begins with "Our Father, who art in Heaven." We must love our Lord in all we do. Now let us tell Him that we love Him by singing those hymns, "It is Love," and "Jesus' Love." The instinct of love is satisfied and purified. It is seen in nature, at home, and then led to God's love for little children. The sepia-tinted pictures of the robins, mother's arms, and father's welcome home prepare the child for the rich coloured religious ones of "Jesus teaching from a boat," by Subercaseau, and "Jesus blessing little children," by the same artist. The whole section aims at bringing home to the child the meaning of the words "Our Father," according to the measure of his capacity. Similarly, the other instinctive needs of the child are catered for: food (pp. 32-48), protection (pp. 49-68), remedy (pp. 69-79), and the imitativeness of the child (pp. 80-97).

The *First Book* claims to embody the practice of the Church concerning young children. The catechumens of the first centuries were taught the Our Father and the Apostles' Creed. Biblical stories illustrated the truths contained in the two prayers, and also the moral lesson contained in them. They were a preparation for the Sacraments they were about to receive. Dr. Shields claims to adopt that practice here, and justifies himself: "The words of the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, and the Creed are much easier for little children than most of our Catechism answers. If Bible stories of the Creation, of the fall of our first parents, and some chapters of the New Testament are judiciously used, both to illustrate the truths contained in the ancient Catechism of the Church and to impress upon the children their most important duties, they will learn all they need, and in addition to it,

doctrine, history, practice, and devotion will come to them as an organic whole. This arrangement will also secure the 'concentration of instruction' and 'the progress in concentric circles' so loudly and justly demanded by modern education. While helping them to lead Christian lives according to their age and capacity, we shall also lay a solid foundation on which future instruction and education may be built up without removing a single particle."[1] Dr. Shields mentions as a footnote that this scheme was proposed eighty years ago by Archbishop Grüber of Salzburg, and later by Bishop Messmer.

(3) *One Text in the Hands of the Child.*—Dr. Shields insists on the use of one text—his reader. He banishes Catechism and systematic Bible History from the first three grades absolutely, and discourages the use of them in any grade. The Catechism text is unsuitable. "The first thing to be done is to awaken the child's interest in the subject instead of beginning with definitions of theology. The only way in which we may give the child a clear and fruitful understanding of these same abstract truths is, by leading him up to them through attractive concrete presentations of the truth in embodiments that touch the child's imagination and arouse his enthusiasm. That is our aim now."[2] In support of this he quotes the practice of St Augustine[3] in "beginning the instruction of converts with a connected narrative of the chief events in the history of God's dealings with men."[4] The Munich School is also quoted because "the instruction never begins with the catechetical questions. The aim is to capture the child's interest at the beginning and to hold his attention throughout."[5] He discards the Catechism because of its question and answer method. "The child loves a simple, connected story, and it is only out of this form that they are able to derive clear concepts of the matter in hand. The question and answer

[1] "Notes on Education," *C.U.B.*, 1910, vol. xvi.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 268.
[3] *De Catechizandis Rudibus.*
[4] "Notes on Education," *C.U.B.*, 1910, vol. xvi, p. 270.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 269.

form appeals only to children, (1) who rely exclusively on memory, or (2) who shirk the burden of thinking, or (3) who are afraid of their teacher and do not dare reveal their own thoughts lest ridicule follow."[1]

The Catechism could never suit, no matter how simplified it may be made, and so it must depart from the school to yield exclusive sway to the reader in the early grades. "The ordinary Catechisms are eminently unsuited to the child in the primary grades, and no amount of explanation and illustration can transform them into suitable books for children in this phase of development."[2]

Dr. Shields is quite clear in his attitude to the Catechism and its question and answer form. He objected to the text-books published by Dr. Yorke because they retained "the old analytical methods." His readers discard them completely, and he tells us why. He confesses his indebtedness to St Augustine's *De Catechizandis Rudibus* for the "narratio," and to the Munich Method for the principle of "begin with the story" as the best approach to the child. To banish the Catechism because "it relies exclusively on memory" is to do it an injustice. The abuse of a method does not destroy its use. *The Sower* Scheme agrees that "the ordinary Catechisms are eminently unsuited to the child in the primary grades." We agree that to begin with the Catechism is to make a false start. Dr. Shields' faith in the self-sufficiency of his text-books was so strong that he considered the Catechism unnecessary at any stage of the primary school. Dr. Yorke begins and ends with the Catechism, but under the influence of the Munich Method he leads to the lesson through story and explanation. *The Sower* Scheme makes the Catechism the text of the middle school (*i.e.*, eight to twelve years). It does not appear in the infant school (*i.e.*, five to eight), and may occasionally be seen in the high school (*i.e.*, twelve and after) as a reference book. The question is, What is to take its place in the infant school, as we consider that it should

[1] "Notes on Education," *C.U.B.*, 1910, vol xvi, p. 270.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 271.

be evicted from there? Dr. Yorke's *First Grade* is a Catechism reader. *The Sower* Scheme prescribes no text, but suggests that "perhaps some day there will be religious 'readers,' at any rate, leaflet readers, for the latter part of this stage."[1]

Dr. Shields places his *First Book* in the hands of the child as quickly as possible. The child is to learn to read from *First Book*. We think that Dr. Shields is right in prescribing a reader for the infant school. It is a better instrument in leading the child "to know, love, and serve God" than a Catechism, no matter how "transformed" it may be. We hold, however, that the Catechism must find a place in the primary school. *The Sower* Scheme solution appeals to us. The arguments that Dr. Shields urges against the Catechetical Method in question and answer form are based on its misuse. The method remains a sound and reliable instrument of teaching, and can be fully appreciated by those "who do *not* shirk the burden of thinking."

In the account of his school-days in *The Making and Unmaking of a Dullard*, we see the dominance of unexplained, unprepared memory-drills. Dr. Shields rushes to the opposite extreme. Memorising is anathema, nothing can justify its presence within the doctrinal lesson in religion. Anything that may help to foster it must go. In fact, memorising is a hindrance to the development of the child. He did not pause to ask why memorising failed. The teaching in the past failed, not because it gave much time to memorising, but because it did not prepare the way for memory work. The Catechetical Method is saner and sounder on this point. In this, and in other details of method, the Yorke Method and *The Sower* Scheme show more of the evidence of the experienced teacher than does the Shields Method.

(4) *The Double Function of Religion and Reader.*—In the beginning grades the text must serve as the ordinary school reader as well as the text-book on religion. In the Sug-

[1] *The Givers*, p. 179.

gestions to Teachers printed as an appendix to *First Book*, Dr. Shields outlines the all-embracing scope of this text: "Catholic Education Series, *First Book* is designed to serve as the child's first reader, but it has a far more important function than this to perform. It is, in fact, the child's first book along all the lines of his development. It is a reader, a nature study book, a book of instruction on home life, an elementary text-book of religion, and an art book dealing with the threefold root of the æsthetic faculty—viz., form, colour, and rhythm. These five lines are not dealt with separately, but are woven into organic unity" (p. 98). He justifies this wide scope of a text that is to combine so many aspects by his view, "Religion is the core-subject." "One of the chief needs of the child in the primary grades is unity and close correlation in the material of instruction. We sin against this principle when we place in the child's hand in the First and Second Grades, a separate text-book of religion, whether we call it a Catechism or a Christian Doctrine Manual, or by whatever name we choose to call it. A single text-book is sufficient. It should stand as a symbol of unity for the child. Call the book reader if you will, but in so doing you emphasise the formal side of the art of reading and relegate the content to a subordinate place. The dominant and central element of the child's first books should be religion, hence the name *Religion, First Book.*"[1] The text was first published in 1908 under the title *Religion, First Book.* In the second edition in 1917 that title was changed, because it "gave rise to no little misunderstanding of the purpose of the book."[2] The book is now named *First Book.*

(5) *Correlation.*—In all his texts the principle of correlation is at work. Home, nature, and God are knit together. Religion and secular subject, natural and supernatural, are closely allied in the presentation of the content, and the teacher is expected to refer to this at all points. Dr. Shields expresses his absolute faith in this principle. "The inti-

[1] "Notes on Education," *C.U.B.*, vol. xvi, p. 165.

[2] Preface, p. 3.

mate correlation between the truths of religion and the truths of science, between our duties to God and our duties to our fellow-men, must not be lost sight of in any stage of the educational process; but it is especially important in the early stages of the development of the child's mind and heart, that the truths of the natural and of the supernatural orders be so closely interwoven that no seam or separation may appear between them in the child's consciousness."[1] The bird and the flower, the savage and the beast of the field, may all be presented to the child if, as in the Gospel parable, they are made the mirrors of higher things. Much attention is to be given to nature stories, with the view of leading the child to see the Creator's footprints in His own work.

No lesson is to stand alone, all are to be correlated. The books are not primarily designed as readers. They are religion texts, though they must not fail as readers. As a reader the text is to develop the home life of the child. It is to create a sympathy with nature. It is to be factual, giving material that can be easily correlated, and through it linking up secular and religious ideas. As a religion book it is to present material for the religious lesson organised in its proper sequence. It is not a mere injection of religious stories and pictures into a secular reader. The text of the early grades aims to do two things: (1) to present material that is interesting to the child, and (2) to lead him by the pathways of virtue to the feet of Christ. Dr. Shields sums up what he hopes from his texts: " Our aim in the *First* and *Second Book* is to capture the imagination, to teach their hearts to love and their actions to be performed under the inspiration and guidance of religion."[2]

The *Second Book* is organised on similar lines. There is a correlation of the parts of the subject-matter. One story grows out of and reaffirms the truth of the other—*e.g.*, compare the story of " King David " (*Second Book*, p. 30) with " The Holy Night " (p. 63). All the material of the

[1] " Notes on Education," *C.U.B.*, 1908, vol. xiv, p. 780.
[2] *Ibid.*, 1910, vol. xvi, p. 781.

domestic and nature study is so arranged that it may be used for the religious lesson—*e.g.*, compare the opening paragraph of "May's Birthday" (p. 24)—"May's heart was bursting with joy as she ran down the steps into the garden. The flowers were all sparkling with dew"—with the "Annunciation" (p. 35): "It was spring. All the world was glad. The pure white lilies were sparkling with dew." In thought and vocabulary the one prepares for the other.

Both texts, *First Book* and *Second Book*, provide for a wider correlation. Religion is not to be isolated. The nature study is exact, factual, preparing the child for other subjects—*e.g.*, "The Magi lived in Persia" sends the children to geography; "The Story of Silver Brook" gives a splendid account of the geography of a river; "Little Fir" makes a beginning in biology by telling much about trees and their relationship to environment.

Book II prepares the child for the ideas embodied in the lessons of Book III (*cf.* p. 95): "The Rock Ledge Light" story aims at imparting the germ of the idea of the Church, which will be developed in the opening chapters of Book III. "The moon and stars, the natural sources of light, were often obscured, leaving the ship to be lost on the rocks, while the unfailing light fed through human agency is typical of the Holy Ghost speaking through man as head of the Church."[1]

Criticism of His Correlation.

Dr. Shields was on fire with the zeal of a reformer, and his zeal carried him over the border of the sane educational fields of *via media*. Every reformer has erred in like manner. Dissatisfied with the old, they rush to the new, forgetting that the old was not completely bad. In our educational strivings we have lost much ground because of the over-zealous reformers. We have had to retrace our steps and pick up many a discarded practice which, in the rush of enthusiasm for the new, we had cast from us. That

[1] "Notes on Education," *C.U.B.*, 1910, vol. xvi.

is the position of memory work to-day. Quiet voices are whispering that we have gone too far. The slogan of "mastery" is growing in volume, and in its train as an honoured attendant, memorising is marching back to a place in the schoolroom. It does not seek its dominating position of yore, but it demands a niche in the classroom practice.

The same is true of the principle of correlation. Religion had been looked upon (can we say, is being looked upon?) as one of the birch twigs in the fagot of education. It lies with its fellows, rubbing shoulders with them, and at times feeling their pressure of numbers crushing it out of a place in the curriculum. There was no bond uniting them except the external string, which did not worry about their personal relations. Religion was looked upon as a water-tight compartment, a strict preserve into which no secular subjects should trespass. The secular subjects became equally emphatic and banished "Catechism" (the nick-name given to religion) from companionship. We know the sad result. Dr. Shields faced the situation, and we think his reform outran his good sense. He is inclined to press correlation too far. His ambition was to go beyond the readers, and write arithmetic texts, geography texts, etc., based on examples taken from religion—*e.g.*, the arithmetic would centre around the building of a church. There is a danger here of bringing religion into ridicule, especially with the "preaching" type of religious teacher.

Limitations.

There are limitations to the principle of correlation. Having connections does not mean that one subject be made the bond-slave of another. Subjects should be on friendly terms with one another, but one should not be twisted for the sake of the other. Correlation shows where one subject is useful for others. It never denies the independent life of a subject. Its exact meaning remains, that on suitable occasions, the teacher of one subject should establish connections with other subjects taught at the same time or

previously. There is no twisting of subjects. Correlation aims at lacing subjects together at points of contact. The binding and interlacing impresses the subject more and more on the pupil's mind. It also strengthens the associations. A correlating attitude on these lines is essential for the successful teacher of religion, if he would form a habit of mind in his children, so that their thoughts would rise from everyday things of life to see God in all things.

(6) *Form, Illustrations, Hymns.*—Dr. Shields has given careful thought and attention to the external appearance of his texts. The ordinary Catechism does not impress a child. In fact, it suffers in comparison with the other books in his satchel. This injures the Catechism in the child's estimation, so ready to take things at their face value. The shabby "thing of rags and tatters," which symbolises religion in the child's school-bag, may have had no little effect on the child's attitude of dislike for the subject. Dr. Shields desires to correct this wrong impression "by suggesting to the child by the get-up of this book that it is more important than any other subject. The three-cent Catechism has given a wrong impression."[1]

The texts are copiously illustrated. The religious pictures are coloured copies of the Great Masters. The secular pictures are sepia tints, to bring before the mind of the child, by their contrast with the rich colour of the former, that home and nature lead to God, are but means to the end. The child's delight in colour is carried over to the religious scenes. The coloured pictures, in which our Lord is the central figure, will attract and please the child more than the sepia-tinted secular ones. Dr. Shields considers an art training essential to the religious formation of children from the First Grade upwards. The child's own expression in the plastic arts, dramatisation, and drawing, is to lead him to be "keenly alive to the thought element which is expressed in the material forms that grow under his hands."[2] His hope in art rests on philosophy: "This mirrored element in

[1] "Notes on Education," *C.U.B.*, 1910, vol. xvi, p. 78.
[2] *C.E.R.*, September, 1918, p. 144.

art has been spoken of as the Sacramental element, and the analogy is striking, for every Sacrament has in it, as one of its essential elements, a material symbol of the grace which it conveys."[1] The illustrations of the texts aim (1) at being simple, in good taste, true to life; (2) at cultivating the artistic sense; (3) at creating a taste for correct colour combination; (4) at telling the story of the printed text; (5) at emphasising through colour what we want him to love in the pictures—our Lord.

HYMNS.

In *First Book* and *Second Book* the fourth element in each of the parts is represented by two songs. The Catholic Education Music Course has been prepared by Mrs. Justine Ward, founder of the Pius X School of Liturgical Music, New York. The course as planned covers the work of eight years, corresponding to the eight grades of the elementary school. The hymns of the *First* and *Second Book* are taught in a Teacher's Manual and Chart. The work for the Third and Fourth Grades dispenses with the charts, and is embodied in books for the children and manuals for the teachers. In the fourth year the Gregorian Modes are added. Dr. Shields looks on the hymns of the *First* and *Second Book* as "the natural channels for the expression of the child's emotions, and by their aid the child's emotional nature may most effectively be cultivated and drafted into service in the formation of character. . . . To accomplish this the child must be taught to sing the songs beautifully."[2]

All the methods agree that pictures are necessary aids in teaching religion to children. *The Sower* Scheme has published a valuable catalogue, indicating the best houses to get large, medium-sized, and small pictures. Dr. Yorke has outlined a useful plan for the teacher's preparation of the picture lesson. We give our views on the use of pictures elsewhere.

[1] *C.E.R.*, September, 1918, p. 145.
[2] Preface, p. 6 of *First Reader*.

Dr. Shields and Dr. Yorke are on the same platform in decrying the three-cent Catechism. To equip the child with a more prepossessing text-book in religion was one of the reasons that sent both to publish their own. Each author follows the same ideal of imitating the language of Scripture in the stories of the readers. In *Second Book*, Dr. Shields tells the Annunciation story (p. 33) in the words of the Gospel, which the child has grown accustomed to in previous stories modelled on that phraseology. So does Dr. Yorke. The argument is identical in each case. Each holds that the language of the texts aims at preparing the child for the New Testament. A further reason, stressed by both of them, is that the study of the Scriptural language will influence the child's literary taste. Dr. Shields writes: "The New Testament language is the model of the best English style. The ambition is to lead the young child to the fountains of literature, to cultivate in him a taste for the best and fill him with an aversion for the cheap, the tawdry, and the vulgar."[1]

Poems and hymns are much used in each series of texts. Dr. Yorke would have the poems memorised. He quotes the traditional use of verse by the Church as sufficient justification for making verse the vehicle of instruction. "In the Middle Ages the whole Catechism was done into verse, and you can find even to-day among Irish speakers, stave after stave containing the full round of Christian doctrine."[2]

Comment on "First Book."

1. The Order is not Psychological.

We might put ourselves the problem: Does Dr. Shields organise his material in the proper order? Does he proceed from the known to the unknown? Is his order psychological? Does it follow the order of the parables?

To all questions we answer, No. In *First Book* the order is: nature story, domestic story, religious story. Dr. Shields

[1] "Notes on Education," *C.U.B.*, vol. xvi. 1910.
[2] *Teaching of Religion*, P. C. Yorke, p. 55.

begins each of the five sections with a nature story before the child has acquired sufficient knowledge of nature to make it a proper jumping-off base for further knowledge. Christ began with nature in His parables. But we must not forget that His discourses were addressed to adults, whose intimate personal knowledge of nature was hewn out of their daily experiences as tillers of the soil, as herders of flocks, as fishermen of the sea, as labourers in the vineyard. The parables follow the order of known to unknown.

The Shields *First Book* errs by putting the nature study prior to, and leading up to, the domestic story. Home means more to the child of this age than does nature. It would have been more correct to begin with breakfast at home, and then the robins looking for breakfast might have a richer content for the child than the story has in the present arrangement.

Practice Supports our View.

The Thomas Edward Shields Memorial School was established about five years ago (1922) to be an experimental centre for the Shields Method in religion. The school is financed by Mrs. Justine Ward for that purpose. It has the advantage of a highly qualified staff of Dominican Sisters, each of whom has had a University course and a normal training. The Supervisor of the school is a pupil of Dr. Shields, having taken Ph.D. in Education under the guidance of his lectures. Consequently the Shields Method has the unique advantage of being tested and tried in very favourable circumstances. The school also enjoys the rare privilege of the fostering care of the Education Department of the Catholic University, and is guided in all its practice by Rev. Dr. Johnson, the Associate Professor of Education. In our many interviews with all connected with this school, we experienced a frank, scientific attitude on this method, a conviction that it would produce "the goods," but a candid admission that the experimental stage was still in action. The spirit of the method is accepted as pedagogically sound, but the details are found wanting in many ways.

It is reasonable to expect this, when we remember that Dr. Shields died before his detailed course was tested in the crucible of intelligent practice.

The Sister in charge of the First Grade admits that, after a long trial, she had had to change the order of *First Book*. She now begins with the home story, because experience proved that children of this age were more familiar with home than with nature. The breakfast at home means more to them than the robins' breakfast. The order of Home, Nature, Heaven, has had a far-reaching effect on the preparation of the child for the religious lesson. The child can more easily recall the home experiences, and use them as a comparison with the home of Jesus when that topic is reached. Home has, then, a rich content for them, leading on to Nazareth. We must begin with the child's own home to bring out the idea of the bird's home. In the first days at school the child will grasp the significance of the tabernacle in the church, if the instruction has led him to see that it is God's home on earth. The changed order has yielded better results.

2. A Better Classification of Needs.

We differ from the division of instincts into love, food, protection, remedy, and imitation. Love should not be treated as a separate instinct with children of this age, because it enters into the other four so fundamentally that it is the *why* of them all. A better division would be food, protection, remedy, and imitation — all resting on the foundation of love.

$$\frac{\text{Food : Protection : Remedy : Imitation}}{\text{LOVE}}$$

In the stories based on the four instincts, the child's unspoken "why" meets the teacher at every point: "Why does the mother robin bring the wee robins food? Why does she brave severe storms to secure it? Why does she build a beautiful nest?" The answer to all these "whys" must

come back to their own homes: "Why does your mother buy you nice clothes?" The child knows the answer to the "why"—"Because she loves me." Love underlies the other instincts, and is the compelling force that leads the child to act in accordance with the religious story models.

3. The Context Method of Reading Fails.

The Context Method has failed, after a fair trial in the Shields Memorial School. I learned from the Sister in charge of Grade I that it costs too much labour. It meant an individual attention to each child. Every word had to come from the child, no strange word is ever told him. The teacher had to go back and build up the context until the child got the word through its place and meaning.

It is a pity that Dr. Shields did not live to see his method worked out in detail. The weak spots in his technique are detected in the classroom. Had he observed the method at work, he would have changed many things. He fondly hoped that once the power of reading was got through the Context Method, the child had the key to all subjects. He believed that power was more easily and quickly acquired through the Context Method than any other. He therefore banished phonetics, he would have no drill in sounds.

Madame Montessori has made her niche in the temple of education through a method of teaching reading through sounds. There are three steps in her method—(1) sounds, (2) words, (3) phrases—and then the child begins to read. She had the advantage, unquestionably, of beginning with Italian, a language so phonic. Miss J. M. Mackinder, Principal of the Marlborough School, London, proves by her successful work in teaching reading on Montessori lines that the Context Method is not the better way. Her "Chelsea" apparatus has had great successes.[1]

Dr. Shields' *bête noire* in education was drill of any kind. Memorising is a drill, phonetics is a drill, spelling is a drill;

[1] *Individual Work in Infants' Schools*, J. M. Mackinder (The Educational Publishing Co., London, 1925).

therefore they must be supplanted in the schoolroom. He replaced phonetics by the Context Method of reading. He would not allow a spelling-book into the class. He believed that children would pick up spelling as they go along. This faith has failed him in practice. To-day a spelling-book has been introduced into his school. Drill in sounds is also found necessary. Even the much abused Catechism with its memory work in question and answer form, has a place in the middle school (eight to twelve years), as a travelling-companion to the text-books. Reading-charts are also in use.

Lack of essential drill is a big fault in his method. In this, however, he is sinning in company with the educational practice of his country. Had he looked a little closer into his own experience, he might have been warned that memory work is necessary in the acquisition of the instruments of knowledge-getting. His painful efforts to read in later life were due to a lack of training in his youth. The physical drill of reading had been neglected in his case with sad consequences.

4. "First Book" Fails as a Primer.

The *First Book* fails as a beginning reader. It has been found too difficult. The words are not simple. Some of them are beyond the capacity of children of First Grade—*e.g.*, truant (p. 54), lapping (p. 62), and the whole poem "The Father's Love" (p. 45). In the first story we have: "They look around and begin again" (p. 9). That means nothing to the child of six years. "Begin what?" he must necessarily ask, and that sends him back to remember that the robin hops and chirps—he has to connect these two together. We think that is asking too much from him. The robin is perhaps unknown to him. It may not be an experience of his, so we cannot begin with it.

Dr. Shields jumps too quickly in his anxiety to get ideas and thought content. He is inclined to skip the stages through which a child's mind must necessarily creep—*e.g.*, "He loves the sheep and their shepherds. He loves

all who work for others" (p. 20). That jump is too much for a child. The child cannot see the force of that inference —viz., that Jesus loves the shepherds because they work for others, and that He will love the children for the same reason. On this page 20 there are two sentences much too long: "The trees wave a welcome to Jesus because His Father makes them big and strong," and "They fill the air with sweet smells because His Father sends them the sunshine and the rain."

Dr. Shields believed that children would acquire the new words through the Context Method. He expected to develop a vocabulary of 600 to 800 words through this text. He rationalised that the Context Method must work, but it has been tried and it does not work. He held that we can teach new words by approaching them from the thought element, and that we can disregard phonetics.

A Revision Planned.

First Book has to be postponed until children can read it. The ideas and content are developed by the teacher through conversation. It has been found that the brighter pupils do well, but at the end of the first year at school only 50 per cent. can read the text. This is a very serious drawback to the book, and a vulnerable point in the Shields Method. A revision is now being made which plans to lead up to *First Book* through a pre-primer.

What are the Results?

1. The Verdict of the Shields School.

The Shields Memorial School claims to have had great results from *First Book*, but at a tremendous expenditure of energy and skill. As a beginning text, it is not practical because not open to the ordinary child. A simpler introduction is necessary, and to meet the situation the Sister in charge of the First Grade is writing a pre-primer. The Shields order of presentation will be changed to: Home, Nature, God. We have examined the proofs of this pre-

primer, and in our opinion it will meet all the needs of the child, and as a consequence *First Book* will be open to general use. The Sister in the First Grade is perfectly satisfied that the content is admirably suited to the child, and that it yields beautiful ideas. It may be of interest to quote the views of Dr. Johnson: "We think that the Shields Method laying emphasis on thought is correct, and that the content of the texts supplies the suitable material for thinking. Our difficulty is to make *First Book* a simplified reader, and that is our present concern. The Shields books would have a much greater acceptance in this country were it not for the difficulty of teaching religion from the *First Book*. When we remedy that, we hope to follow the Shields Method right through the school."

2. The Verdict of the Diocesan Schools.

American schools are text-book schools. The claim for the text is that it guides the inexperienced teacher, supplying well-organised material in a usable form to suit the child at different stages of development. The author of a text-book in U.S.A. to-day must supply the application of his philosophy to the practice of the classroom. The American text has many teacher's helps, exercises, diagrams, review questions. In fact, it must be fool-proof, so that any teacher may use it. It is a big demand to make from a text, but the supply must endeavour to meet that demand if it hopes for a progeny of editions.

That is the situation that Dr. Shields has to cater for. His texts were adopted in several parochial school systems in U.S.A., and were eventually dropped because teachers could not get results from *First Book*. The ideals of the method could not be achieved, and finding trials unavailing, the texts were exchanged for others. Two of the first diocesan systems to adopt the texts—viz., Cleveland and Pittsburg—dropped them because he had no helps for the teachers untrained in his method. That action of two well-known dioceses did much to wreck his chances of

becoming the popular text-book author of American Catholic schools. Were *First Book* not so difficult to teach, it is most probable that the texts would be in use throughout the Catholic schools of America.

The charge against *First Book* is, that it is not open to the teacher untrained in the Shields " spirit " to use it successfully. In his *Philosophy of Education*, Dr. Shields emphasises that his method is a " spirit " rather than a technique, and that the teacher who did not grasp the principles should not attempt the method. He writes in the Preface to *First Book*: " The teacher who would use this book to the best advantage must work in sympathy with its aims and in harmony with the method upon which it is constructed. Good results cannot be achieved where there is a conflict in aim or method between the teacher and the text-book which is placed in the pupil's hands. This is true throughout the entire educational process, but it is more painfully obvious in the First Grade than in any subsequent phase of the child's development."

The book is rich in content of a suitable kind, and the organisation of the matter is all that could be desired. But the finer and more perfect the instrument, the greater the skill that is demanded of the user. Unless a teacher has been directed to see all that Dr. Shields expects to be drawn from the text, much of the teaching excellence, which is possible to the initiated, is lost. Theology and philosophy are simply garbed in nature and domestic story. Our teaching Sisters of the grade schools are not theologians, and they cannot be expected to see the principles beneath the allegories unless someone points them out. This limits the general application of the Shields Method of teaching religion as expressed in *First Book*. A paradox exists. His method is a text-book one. Yet his texts are so written that it requires a teacher penetrated through and through with the spirit of the text which she uses to reap the ripe fruits of her efforts. Where is the ordinary teacher to receive the initiation into his principles? Dr. Shields says that the principles and details of the method to be employed

are set forth in the *Teacher's Manual of Primary Methods*. We confess that we found it very difficult to unearth those helpful details of method which may be of service to the teacher. Our difficulty is not exceptional. Others have prospected the same mine with little returns in the pure gold of practical advice to the teacher. The Supervisor of the Shields Memorial School, Sister Alma, O.S.D., Ph.D., a student of his, admits that it has taken her years of patient search to extract the hints that help from the mass of materials supplied under the title of the *Teacher's Manual of Primary Methods*. If Dr. Shields expected his texts to be of general application, he should have written a teacher's manual, wherein the teacher could follow the signposts on the road to his ideal method of teaching religion through text-books.

With these limitations, we consider *First Book* an admirable text-book on religion. The limitations can be remedied—in fact, the remedy is at hand. A collection of the writings of Dr. Shields in the periodicals of the Catholic University Press is almost completed, and will be soon issued for the benefit of teachers using his text. It is being compiled by a teacher well versed in his principles and fully conscious of the difficulties which his texts present to the uninitiated. The effort to remodel *First Book* on the lines indicated is in accordance with this plan. When these laudable ambitions are realised in a re-editing of Books I and II, then we may hope that the Shields Method of teaching religion will receive a more general recognition than they enjoy at the moment. The reforms are full of promise.

3. The Verdict of the Press.

When the first of Dr. Shields' text-books appeared in 1908, under the title of *Religion, First Book*, its reception in the Press was a cordial one. We quote the opinions of reviews.

1. "The book awakens the child's sense of beauty. Makes use of visible creatures to lift it to the knowledge

of the invisible God, and it cleverly leads the child from the natural to the supernatural sentiment of love for parents to a realisation of the privilege—more than the duty—of loving its master."

2. "It is certainly gratifying that the method followed by our Lord is so closely followed in your series, and that the method embodied in the liturgical practice of the Church is now being applied to the instruction of our little children . . . to make religion the centre and vitalising principle of all education."

3. "You have domesticated religion in the child's life."

4. "You meet the demands for real food for the growing mind."

5. "A natural appeal to the child's stage of development."

6. "Correlation of nature, home, and revealed religion."

7. "Developing Christian doctrine with the opening of the child mind."

8. *From a teacher*: "In the hands of a competent teacher it (the *First Book*) is a real treasure."

These comments are to receive the same attention which we extend to all book reviews. They are not intended to be a reliable indication of the value of the book reviewed. We know that many reviews are written by reviewers who do not read the book. The comment of the teacher who seemingly tried the *First Book* is more informative than others. "It is a real treasure," not to everyone, but only to "the competent teacher"—*i.e.*, the one trained to see the principles underlying the details of method. The comments are valuable because they concentrate on aspects of the method which we have stressed in our examination of it.

The Shields Method is fundamentally different from the Catechetical Method, which accepts the Catechism text as its core. No improvement, adjustment, or alteration of the Catechetical Method would make them identical. In the debate that followed the presentation of the method by Dr. Shields to the Catholic Educational Association Convention, held at Cincinnati in 1908, Dr. Yorke said: "In

my opinion his system of pedagogy is nothing less than revolutionary."[1] It is a new method, but we do not consider that it deserves the epithet "revolutionary," which carries with it the taint of being unorthodox. The innovation consists in the building on the five instincts of the child. One can accept that division of needs, and that approach to the child without necessarily being dubbed as "revolutionary." For this interesting and candid discussion of the Shields Method, see pp. 223-237 in the *Catholic University Bulletin*.

The article on "Dr. Shields' Catechetical Method," appearing in the *American Ecclesiastical Review* (vol. xxxix, December, 1908, pp. 705-711), was occasioned by this debate. The author supports Dr. Shields, with modifications, and concludes his advocacy: "It should be said, however, that *Religion, First Book*, far outdistances all known English so-called primary Catechisms, even the shortest of them. May primary teachers make the best use of it!" (p. 711).

"Second Book."

Use of Allegory.

By means of allegories, Dr. Shields aims in the *Second Book* to introduce the idea of sin to the child. This is a very important step in the religious education of the child. An idea tends to overflow into action. The educator must give the child a look at sin and then snatch his mind away from it. It is best done in a positive manner by emphasizing the beauty and reward of virtue. The allegory of the Fir-tree passes through seven phases in the text. The fir that we wish the children to admire receives much space, while its sister firs are hurriedly dealt with in a paragraph. Again, the *Second Book* is the book of obedience, and seven phases of that virtue are dealt with. In the development of the plan, six parts are devoted to the teaching of the excellence and rewards of obedience, while only one part deals with the sin of disobedience.

[1] *C.E.A.B.*, 1908, vol. v, p. 235.

Through the allegories of " Little Fir," " Silver Brook," and " The Water Lily," the religious lesson is brought home to the child in an interesting manner, the germinal seeds of the natural sciences of biology and geography are planted, and while drinking in the story the child is receiving useful facts as well. Those truths of the spiritual and natural order are presented to the child in an appetising form through allegories. His imagination is stimulated. It is the method of Christ: " He spoke in parables."

St Augustine advocates the same method: " And as regards the actual value of a hidden meaning, from which those writings derive their names of mysteries, and the power of these concealed oracles to sharpen the desire for truth and to shake off the torpor induced by surfeit, such men must have this shown by actual experience, wherein something which failed to stir them, when set plainly before them, is brought to light by the unravelling of some allegory. For it is most useful for these men to know that the meaning is to be regarded as superior to words, just as the spirit is to be preferred to the body."[1]

There is a philosophy underlying the stories in the text. When we unfold the simple garb of allegory that covers it, we see the two sins of childhood—vanity and selfishness—depicted in two of the fir-trees, while the third fir reaps the reward of the opposite virtues. Dissatisfaction is the spring of sin and virtue. Luther was dissatisfied because of his selfishness, he thought he could better himself. He reaped discontent and sorrow as the harvest of his sowing. So with the dissatisfied fir-trees: " The pines were cut down and sawed into lumber " (p. 53). St Catherine of Siena was dissatisfied with the Church of her day because she was anxious to do more for Christ. So is the artist dissatisfied with his creation until " the infinite capacity for taking pains " produces the masterpiece. Little Fir exemplifies the reward that follows " divine discontent ": " The children were downstairs early Christmas morning. They found Little Fir covered with glory " (p. 59).

[1] *De Catechizandis Rudibus*, translated by P. J. Christopher, p. 43.

In Part III the child is led to see God, through the eyes of the Magi, as the Author of all natural phenomena. The peace of the heavens, resulting from the obedience of the heavenly bodies to the laws of God, the peace and joy that fill the hearts of the Wise Men because of their earnest desire to know God's Will, and their constant habit of obeying it, are brought into sharp contrast with the wretchedness and misery of the rabble which filled the streets of Babylon with noisy disorder. The peace of Bethlehem, contrasted with the unhappiness of Babylon, builds up an attitude of revulsion for sin in the hearts of children, and leads them to love order and obedience. Part IV is a study in sin, and is very important in the development of the child's attitude towards temptation and sin. On p. 58 of *First Book*, temptation appears when little May was attracted by the chicks, but was afraid. In the "Story of the Holy Innocents," p. 100, *Second Book*, the idea of sin is developed.

Dr. Shields makes known his plan: "In the story of the massacre of the innocents an opportunity is found to present to the children the seven capital sins in such a way as to ensure their recoil and aversion from sin and its consequences. It is important that the lesson be concrete, otherwise it will not be effective. The children must see the hideousness of the sin in individual conduct, and for the accomplishment of this end every precaution must be taken to prevent their sympathies going out to the man who sins and who is punished. The story, we believe, will bear careful study by all those to whom is entrusted the difficult task of developing a correct attitude in the children's minds towards sin."[1]

The children are brought through this gruesome scene, so that they may be prepared to understand something of the great crime committed by our first parents. In the story of "The Flaming Sword," p. 141, the disobedience of Adam and Eve is told. The matter is so arranged that the children will appreciate the effect of the sin, the justice

[1] "Notes on Education," *C.U.B.*, 1910, vol. xvi, p. 483.

of the punishment, as well as the mercy and compassion of God in sending them out of the Garden with the hope of redemption in their hearts.

Order of the Book.

"The seven parts of Book II deal with seven phases of obedience. The reward of perfect obedience is exhibited in the Annunciation. The first end of obedience, prayer, or private worship, is shown in the visit of the shepherds. The second end of obedience, public worship, is presented in the adoration of the Magi. That obedience is for our good is made evident in the Angel's command to Joseph to fly into Egypt. The elements of perfect obedience are presented in the finding in the Temple. The result of obedience is presented in Christ's command over the forces of nature, culminating in the healing of the daughter of Jairus. The disobedience of our first parents and its consequences are presented in Part VI, and the remedy for this disobedience is presented in the closing part on Redemption."[1] Parts I to III deal with obedience to God under the first Table of the Law. Parts IV to VII deal with obedience to God under the second Table of the Law.

To develop the positive manner of introducing the idea of sin to the child, Dr. Shields devotes this text to the teaching of the virtue of obedience. All true educators will agree that obedience or discipline is a cardinal virtue. On the natural plane, it is essential in the formation of character. On the supernatural plane it is of eternal importance: "Not everyone that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the Will of My Father who is in Heaven, he it is that will enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

The End in View.

Dr. Shields writes in the Preface (p. 5): "After appealing to the fundamental instincts of the child, and transforming them as indicated in the *First Book*, the next step, and a most important one, is to develop in the child's mind the

[1] Preface, pp. 6-7.

idea of a divine law which may be obeyed or violated according to the free determination of the human will. The essential thing in religion is the fulfilling of God's Holy Will. To this end all the teaching of the Sacred Scriptures, the explicit precepts of the Decalogue, and the Commandments of the Church are directed. It is, therefore, needful that the child, from his earliest years, should have impressed upon the mind the conception of an all-pervading law, not as a despotic ordinance, but as a rule of conduct which is designed for his own good." Dr. Shields insists on the necessity of developing in the child the correct attitude to law, especially to the law of God. "Too often the child is led to look on the ten commandments as curtailments of liberty, instead of helps to happiness. Fear of God may be the beginning of wisdom, but love of God is the perfection of wisdom. It means much for the child's development to have approached the ten commandments in the right way."[1]

This principle underlies true service to God and country. It is the bed-rock of loyalty. "We must avoid, with the greatest care, the impression that the commandments are a wearisome burden imposed by a strict Master. They are a light, a guide, and a safeguard on our way to Heaven, and they offer to us constant opportunities of showing in a very small way our gratitude and love to our Heavenly Father, and in addition of increasing our eternal reward and glory," writes Lambert Nolle, O.S.B., *re* "What are we to Teach the Infant?"[2]

We must inculcate that attitude to obedience in the child or we shall fail to hold him. The right spirit of obedience needs training, so that the child will obey the law, not because punishment follows violation, but because the law is reasonable, given for his greater good. In the story of the Flight into Egypt (p. 96), Dr. Shields teaches the value of prompt obedience through the example of the Holy Family and the Magi. Mary did not question Joseph, even though she thought it very strange to set out for an unknown land in

[1] "Notes on Education," *C.U.B.*, 1910, vol. xvi, p. 486.
[2] *C.E.R.*, February, 1911, p. 130.

the middle of the night. Human wisdom said to the Magi that they should return to Herod, but they followed the Angel's whisper. In both cases they had to act humanly with little active help. They heard the voice of authority, and they promptly obeyed. Both examples lead the child to bend to the voice of authority impressed in the law of God.

EXPRESSION.

Besides the expression work done by hand in the plastic arts, there is a list of questions attached to each part which demand from the pupils a close observation of the story. No answers are given to aid the pupil. As the book proceeds, short passages of Holy Scripture, which express the thoughts of the lesson, are to be memorised (*cf.* pp. 50 and 61); those extracts embody the central thought of the lesson.

THE MIDDLE GRADES—III TO VI.

"THIRD READER," "RELIGION, THIRD BOOK."

In Grades I and II, one text-book is put in the hands of children for the reasons that we noted. A change of method opens with Grade III, and from this onwards the child has two texts, the one a reader, and the other a religion book. Both books are to be used simultaneously. They are complementary. The *Third Reader* is the proximate preparation of the child's mind for the corresponding part of *Religion, Third Book.* Separate books are due to the importance of the matter needing more space. The analogy of food explains the change from the one text. The young child receives all the nourishment of fats, proteins, vitamins, and minerals in one form, milk. He is not able to receive it in any other manner. As the child advances in age, it becomes possible to receive these qualities of nourishment in different forms. He is able to assimilate the nutritive qualities presented in separate ways—*e.g.*, bread, meat, vegetables, milk, etc. So in the mental nourishing of the child, we give all in one form at the beginning of education.

As the child grows mentally, we can present the food in many forms, and in that way deal with each more fully.

"THIRD READER."

Books I and II aim at a personal training of the child. The germinal ideas of social study were planted, and in *Third Reader* they receive their needed expansion. The aim of the *Third Reader* is expressed in the Preface (p. 5). "If the knowledge and influence of religion are essential for the conduct of the individual life, they are of no less importance for the well-being of society. On the other hand, religion itself cannot be confined to the belief and practice of each private mind, it must pervade the social organism, find expression in public worship, and derive strength from the various forms of human activity as these are presented in science and literature, history and art. The ultimate purpose, therefore, of both series, is one and the same—viz., to make religion, with its truths, its duties, and its sanctions, the controlling factor of thought and action in the community at large, as well as in each of its members."

The book aims at inculcating lessons of loyalty to God, country, and fellow-man. This is done through stories carefully selected, exemplifying moral qualities in such a way that the child's imagination is lit up and his imitative impulses are stimulated. The stories are drawn from various sources, and chosen because they present content that will be easily and naturally developed in the later books of the series. The ideas of Books I and II are revived and deepened. The text is generously illustrated. Poems are introduced to summarise the pith of ideas in the prose. Appended to each story is an application to the child, entitled "Lessons for Life."

The book is divided into three parts. Part I aims at developing and instructing conscience. Part II develops courage in its various forms. Part III shows the necessity of obeying God rather than man whenever a conflict occurs between these two sources of authority. It is one thing to know the law, and another to have the courage to fulfil it.

The *Third Book* hopes to instil that courage which is the basis of civic life, and which will strengthen the child to obey God's law in preference to any human document that may run counter to it.

Religion, Third Book is devoted wholly to the work of Redemption as foreshadowed in the Old Testament and fulfilled in the New. It joins with the *Third Reader* in an appeal to the child to realise that the events of the Old and New Testament were not written merely to perpetuate the knowledge of kings that are past, but rather are designed to instruct us in right conduct at the present—*e.g.*, the coward and his wife of *Third Reader* is a presentation of the story of Adam and Eve as it is reflected in human life.

"The book is divided into four parts. Part I employs the types and figures of the Old Testament, and the events of the New Testament, to bring home to the child a realisation that salvation is to be wrought through obedience to God, and to legitimately constituted authority. Part II seeks to make plain to the child the meaning and necessity of sacrifice. It begins with the sacrifices offered by Cain and Abel, and culminates with the sacrifice on Calvary. Part III develops the nature and necessity of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. Part IV shows man's need of God's presence to preserve him from sin and lead him back to Paradise."[1] The method is the same as that outlined for the other grades. Attached to each story is a section named "Thoughts for Us," which give the application of the moral in the form of spiritual bouquets. A list of questions without answers is also appended, to set the pupils thinking on the ideas of the stories.

"Fourth Reader."

In the Preface Dr. Shields outlines the aims of reading in the classroom as "thought acquisition, vocal expression, and literary appreciation." Those aims are to be striven for in the organisation and articulation of the materials of the book. *Fourth Reader* bears the same relation to *Religion*,

[1] Preface, p. 6.

Fourth Book as exists between the two texts prescribed for Grade III.

The content of *Fourth Reader* is selected for the fulfilment of those aims—" To lay the foundation in the child's mind for a correct understanding of the conquest of the spirit over the brute forces of human nature, and to trace for him the development of modern civilisation under the inspiration and the guidance of the Catholic Church. The *Third Reader* closed with the conversion of Constantine. The sign of the Cross which he saw in the heavens with the legend under it, 'In this sign thou shalt conquer,' is shown in the *Fourth Reader* to be the sign of conquest throughout the whole process of building up Christian civilisation."[1] The plan of the stories is biographical. Around the central figures of St Leo, St Patrick, St Benedict, St Francis, King Arthur, Roland, Richard the Lion-hearted, etc., the history of the period is entwined. Persons are always interesting to the child, and the historical setting makes the story not merely more appetising, but more valuable and instructive.

Vocal expression is provided for in the dialogue form given to several of the stories, facilitating the pupils' speech, and opening up opportunities for dramatisation. Literary appreciation is kept in mind by the author. The poems and prose help each other. Poems explain the prose, and the prose sheds light on the following poem. The poems play a double rôle in the *Fourth Reader*. They help to develop the child's imagination, giving him freedom in handling the thought contained in the stories. They also serve as a link, preserving thought continuity between the several stories. The applications and questions of the *Third Reader* are omitted here, in the hope that " better results may be achieved in this stage of the pupil's development by his own efforts under the teacher's guidance."[2]

" Religion, Fourth Book."

This is the Mass Book of the series wherein " the child will find the great central source of grace which will enable

[1] Preface, p. 7.

[2] Preface, p. 10.

him to live worthily in the Kingdom of God on earth."[1] Its relation to the reader is outlined in the Preface: "In the *Fourth Reader* the child will learn something of the great work which the Catholic Church has accomplished among men. He will see how she gradually established Justice and Mercy as controlling principles in social life, how pagans were taught to respect labour, how the arts of war were softened, and how they gradually gave place to the arts of peace. In *Religion, Fourth Book* the child will be taught how to worship God worthily, both as an individual and as a member of organised society. He will thus learn that the best of all human achievements should always be directly offered to God, and that in this way alone work from man's hands may grow in perfection."[2]

In Grades I and II, the child was led to see God in nature, now the child is to be taught to see God in the best of art. The claim of the Church as Mistress of the Arts is brought before him, and through the illustrations, poems, and matter of the text, he is convinced that the claim is well established. But it is not art for art's sake. It is art for God's sake. "Above all, the child should learn through the use of this book to perceive the exalted truths which are reflected in all the works of religious art."[3] The poems are not links, as they are in the *Fourth Reader*, "they are always consonant with the prose text."[4]

"Fifth Reader."

"To introduce the children to the study of English literature is the chief aim of this reader. The *Fourth Reader* of the series aimed to prepare the child for the study of literature and style. The materials were all shaped so as more effectively to attain this end. The *Fifth Reader*, on the contrary, presents only classical selections and presents them without change. . . . Proper use of the *Fifth Reader* should prepare the children to study separate classics, and it will be better for them to do so in the Sixth Grade than to be restricted

[1] Preface, p. 5.
[2] Preface, pp. 5-6.
[3] Preface, p. 6.
[4] Preface, p. 7.

to the simpler and briefer selections which alone are possible in a reader."[1] The book is divided into four parts. Part I serves as an introduction to classical and modern literature. Part II presents a brief historical sketch of the Catholic Church. Part III deals with matter that is of value for the child in correlation with profane history. Part IV is purely literary in its value.

General Comment.

We have outlined the Shields plan of campaign in his text-books. The beginning years are provided for in *First Book* and *Second Book*. One text is to serve both grades as a reader and a book of Christian doctrine. In the middle years—*i.e.*, Grades III to V—the same idea of organising the content prevails. The child's development is growing, and he is able to grasp the unity of purpose, though presented in separate forms. The reader bears the same relationship to religion book as the nature and domestic stories bear to the religious story in the early grades.

We consider that the content of those texts is suitable, and that the order of presentation is in accordance with the psychological growth of the child. The texts are very well produced, and will create a favourable impression on the child. In binding, printing, and wealth of illustration, they compare with texts in use in secular subjects, and, consequently, the contrast is no longer at the expense of the "three-cent Catechism."

What are the Results?

1. The Verdict of the Shields School.

The Shields Memorial School has been at work on the method for the past five years. The teachers are trained to pick the plums out of the Shields basket of hints. I have interviewed all of them, and discussed every aspect of the method candidly. All agree that the fruit has been worth the planting. The texts are acceptable because of their content, their organisation, their production. The spirit

[1] Preface, p. 5.

which animates the manner of teaching them is also acceptable. Details of method, the further application of principles, the hammering out of improvements through daily trial, are necessary with a method which was never fully tested by its author.

In an interview granted to me, the Rev. Dr. Johnson, Director of the School, sums up the verdict: "The results of the Shields Method are easily seen in the character of our children. Parents and teachers observe a great change for the better in the children nourished on the Shields diet."

2. The Verdict of Others.

Dr. Shields banished the Catechism from Grades I and II (*i.e.*, six to eight years). In the other grades (III to VI—*i.e.*, eight to twelve years) he discouraged its use, and the teachers of his method disregarded it. Dr. Shields had absolute faith in his texts. They were sufficient, and therefore the Catechism was unnecessary. We have seen his argument against the use of the Catechism. It fosters memorising, and of course that "hinders the development of the child." The discussion, that followed the presentation of his method in 1908 to the Catholic Education Association Convention, seized on these two points.

Dr. Yorke Argues for the Catechism.

We find that the speakers cherished the conviction that a Catechism text was necessary in the teaching of Christian doctrine. Dr. Yorke of San Francisco expressed that feeling: "I must disagree with Dr. Shields. I believe some kind of a Catechism is necessary. Since the time St Paul exhorted Timothy to hold the form of sound words, the Church has been careful to formulate her doctrine in clear and precise statements. While there is need of much preliminary training, and the Catechism itself should be the flowering of the previous instruction, a formulated answer is necessary, and such a formulated answer is best provided for by the Catechism Method."[1]

[1] *C.E.A.B.*, 1908, vol. v, p. 225.

MEMORY WORK DEFENDED.

Dr. Shields' suggestion that " memory loads of Catechism " should be discarded, coupled with an implicit disparagement of memory work in Christian doctrine, did not receive unanimous consent at the Convention.

" What powers are most alive in the child ? Are they not his memory and his propensity to imitate, and not his understanding or his will power ? It would, therefore, be a grave error, in my estimation, to suppress or minimise the functions of memory in the early years of religious teaching."[1]

" The formulæ which enshrine Catholic doctrine must be carried by the memory. Inaccuracy is the sin of the new pedagogy, and nowhere will inaccuracy work such havoc as in religion. Definitions are necessary, and there is only one way to make sure of definitions, and that is by the brute force of memory,"[2] is the strong statement of Dr. Yorke.

But Dr. E. A. Pace makes a distinction between sheer memorising and logical memory, indicating that Dr. Shields condemns only the former kind. " You can teach a man a formula and have him repeat it as often as you please without adding anything to his real knowledge. You can teach a child all the answers in the Catechism without in any way affecting the life of that child, except perhaps in surcharging his brain and wearying his mind. . . . What is the value of such memorising ? The phonograph remembers; it is a better preserver than any human mind; but what good does all that do to the phonograph ?"[3]

We think that all agree in discrediting the " phonograph " type of memorising in Christian doctrine, and in demanding a thorough preparation of matter before committing it to memory. In his rush for thought Dr. Shields forgot that " habituation comes before reasoning." The education of the past erred, not by having memorising so prominent, but by not having the subject-matter to be memorised under-

[1] Brother John A. Waldron, *C.E.A.B.*, 1906, vol. v, p. 232.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 235.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 234.

stood and explained beforehand. Learning by heart was an end in itself. The antagonists of memory work quite forget that in continental countries there is four times as much memorising as in English-speaking schools. Memory work must have a big share in school work, especially during the years from eight till twelve. Christian doctrine is to be no exception. All children are equal to memory work. It comes within the reach of all. They do it with pleasure during the years of "habituation." It is one of the things children can do well and experience the satisfaction of success. The chief gain of memorising during school years is that it fosters the habit of using it afterwards—a valuable acquisition, surely. For children it is a help to understanding.

The Test of Practice.

The Shields Memorial School is bringing back the Catechism text to a more honoured place in Grades IV to VI.

The experience of the past few years has manifested the limitation of the Shields Method in discrediting the memorising of the Catechism. Provided the Catechism is explained and that the children understand the doctrine, as far as they can, memorising is a distinct gain.

Observations of the Shields Method at Work.

The Thomas Edward Shields Memorial School at Brookland, D.C., is attached to the Education Department of the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. The school has been founded, and is maintained, as an experimental centre for the Shields Method of teaching religion. I have observed the method at work in all grades of the school.

The school aims at setting the child, in all grades, to do his own thinking. The principle on which the school acts is: If one wishes to lead the child to think in religion he must begin by getting the child to think in all that he does. The various forms of expression work are the means to this

desired end. The Rev. Dr. Johnson, the Director of the school, summarises the teaching ideals: "When the classroom is organised on the basis of active doing, rather than passive listening, you have the proper atmosphere."[1]

Teaching by Projects.

An essential part of the method consists of the "projects" worked by the children.

1. *The Manger Project.*

The pupils of Grade I concentrate on the life of Christ. For Christmas (1926) they faced a big project of making a manger for the Crib and a home for the Holy Family. Every child did something: working in pairs, they cut the wood, painted it, and nailed it. All the time they lived through the scenes of Bethlehem while doing it. The Sister in charge told me that she remembers the day the manger could stand up. She was at the far end of the classroom helping some backward children to read, when a shout of joy, coming spontaneously from those who saw the manger stand, attracted her attention. Some days before the Christmas holidays the manger was carried in solemn procession to the Convent Oratory, and there placed before the statue of our Lady as the children's offering to her.

2. *The Temple Project.*

Another project I witnessed in the making was the building of a model of Jerusalem in the sand tray. The Temple was made of gold paper. Its importance was indicated as the only church in Jerusalem to which so many people came. The courts of the priests and of the women were pointed out. A comparison with the parish church was made. The richness of the material with which the Temple was built far exceeded the humble parish church building. Yet the parish church has something better,

[1] "The Dawn of a Better Day," George Johnson, *C.E.R.*, September, 1926, vol. xxiv, p. 390.

more precious, making it more holy and pleasing to God —the Blessed Eucharist. In this manner the young children were led up to the Real Presence. When they came to the story of the loss in the Temple their minds were ready. They easily saw that on occasions the Temple was as precious as our church is to-day—when Christ spoke there.

Typical of other projects that I observed in the Shields School were, St Patrick in Grade IV, and an education pageant in Grade VIII.

3. *An Education Project.*

Grade VIII was studying Fouard's *Life of Christ.* The mystic Body of Christ, as exemplified in the activities of the Church, was done in a special way. Under the various headings of Church work, pupils were set to work at reference books. Under "Education," small deputations were selected to interview the University Professors and learn from them what the Church was doing for education to-day. Others were sent to the libraries to learn what she had done in the past. As a conclusion to their research, the class staged a pageant on education. The whole thing was produced by the children, with no help from the teachers. It was written, staged, costumed, and presented by the children. The pageant represented: (1) School in Monastic Days, (2) St Thomas Aquinas, the Patron of Schools, (3) Charlemagne, (4) Schools of Chivalry, (5) American Indian Schools, (6) Modern Schools. The class spent one fortnight in its preparation. We saw the pageant, and it was a very creditable performance. There was none of the word-perfect and mechanical acting which the much drilled school play exhibits. The children were natural on the stage, and gave one the impression of thoroughly enjoying themselves during the play. It was a fitting conclusion to their class work. I learned that the amount of research work occasioned by the project was big. The class studied pictures to get the correct costume and scenic presentation. As a result, the class had a deeper concept of what a school meant in the different ages.

THE SCHOOL OF ASCETICISM.

There must be opportunities for practice in the acquiring of habits in school. "Habits are the result of actions, not of homilies. If you want a child to be unselfish, you must allow him free opportunity to do unselfish things. Not by means of maxims learned by heart in childhood, to be applied when we grow up, are our characters formed. They are formed by the constant practice of virtue from babyhood onwards."[1]

The school rests on the principle that the temple of the heart must be built by the inward dweller. It looks to the greatest school of habit formation that exists to-day, the school of asceticism, as its model and exemplar. In the Catholic novitiate the aspirant is trained to be a good religious, not in a general way, but each specific habit is drilled—*e.g.*, the particular examination, meditation, the virtue of obedience, are brought down to detailed duties, etc. The method is individualised. Each novice receives personal attention from the spiritual director—*e.g.*, his predominant fault is singled out for special attention, a personal motive is suggested to him in his particular examination, meditation is a personal chewing of religious truths, etc. The same ideal is now applied in the schoolroom. The individual method enables the child to see his faults and to apply the cure to the ill. Self-discipline grows out of self-knowledge. There has been much talk wasted in speaking about the virtues in a general way—*e.g.*, Be kind, be honest, be upright, etc. The school can learn a lesson from the Scout Law, which demands the practice of specific natural virtues. The scout is not asked to be "kind"—but the Scout Law says: "When you see a boy in trouble go and help him out." The "Transfer of Training" controversy has many applications to the training of right habits in the school. A good result of it is that we know that specific drill is necessary to acquire specific habit. The mere doing

[1] "The Dawn of a Better Day," George Johnson, *C.E.R.*, September, 1926, vol. xxiv, p. 390.

of a thing may not create a habit—*e.g.*, a man may play golf all day and never improve. He needs a professional to point out his faults, and then by concentrating on them he improves. In the mental order, we isolate difficulties and make them the subject of specific drill. So in the moral order, a child needs specific guidance and specific practice in the particular virtue he is lacking in.

Religious teachers are to realise that a habit requires (1) freedom; (2) practice; (3) definite instruction. Freedom implies a choice. A choice implies decision. Decision implies thought. Therefore, it is a training to think in religion. Practice means that the child has opportunities to exercise the habit. It is not enough to hear it. The habit becomes functional through a freedom to practise it. Definite instruction implies a guidance, that brings the application of the virtue down to the actual concrete facts of the child's life.

The "Secret" a Particular Examen.

We have observed the training-ground for the formation of habit in the Shields School. The particular examination of the novitiate is adapted to the children in the form of the practice of the "secret." This is at work in all grades, and through it, home, church, and school are closely linked together. Dr. Shields hints at the idea in Book II, p. 27, where "The Secret" tells of Mary's gift to the Mother of God on her birthday. The children of each grade are asked each day during the religion lesson "to think hard," and answer some questions in their own minds. We have watched the children of Grade I as they answered in their own minds: "Did I say my prayers well? Did I push other children in school to-day? Did I go to bed when mother asked me to? Did I come to the Children's Mass on Sunday last?" This is a check on the instructions, and a direction of the children to the acquiring of virtues through specific practice of them. The same practice continues throughout the grades, leaving the questions to be put by the children to themselves, as the years advance.

THE CHILDREN'S MASS ON SUNDAYS.

I have observed the practice during the thanksgiving, which is conducted by the Director (Dr. Johnson) at the Children's Mass on Sundays. Many children who appeared restless and tired towards the end of Mass, became alert and interested when told to " think hard and see what hard thing you will do for Jesus during the coming week." Love must play a large part in the fostering of habits in the young —all their efforts must be coloured with the love of Him " who went down to Nazareth and was subject to them." The " secret " attracts the child as it does the man.

It is a human attraction that can be easily spiritualised in the school. Telling the child to have a " secret " with God, to promise to do something that no one else may know of, captivates him. The teachers of the Shields School declare that the practice of the " secret " has been very fruitful in the lives of the children. It has settled the discipline of the school. The First Grade teacher assured me that its practice has cured the bad habit, which the child brings to school, of pushing others with his hands.

COMMENT.

SELF-ACTIVITY.

In all this we see that Dr. Shields is an ardent advocate of the school of self-activity. Action is to be the principle of education. Give the child opportunities, and encourage him to do things. Let the child learn by doing, and get him to think while he is doing them. (*Cf.* the project of the manger, which the children lived while doing it.) Subjects have a new value scale. There is less anxiety to see results. Growth is gradual. It matters not if there seems to be little gain. We are to wait for results. The glib memoriser fades away, and the doer, the solver of difficulties, the thinker, wins. The class may not seem to make much progress, but in a few months it outsteps children trained in other methods. The child, by doing things for himself, is trained to think for himself.

Teaching to Think.

We are in complete agreement with this ideal of Dr. Shields, that children should be taught to think in religion. The Jews of old knew all the formulæ of their faith, and they observed the ritual, ceremonial, the washing, and outward signs of fasting. But Christ was not satisfied, because "there was none who thinketh in his heart." The same holds true of our day. Christ certainly made men think in His teaching. How did He do it? He began with nature and the experiences of man, and from that starting-point He led them on a thought excursion. "They wondered at the eloquence that fell from His lips"; and wonder is the beginning of taking thought with oneself.

Dr. Johnson sums up the results of five years' trial of the method at the demonstration school: "The organisation of schools on the basis of self-activity and individual attention demands a new technique. . . . Our children know how to work and study by themselves from the First Grade up, and they are happy in their activities. A survey made of the work last year revealed that they are up to and above the ordinary standards in all the branches. Our faith in them has been richly rewarded. This is particularly true in the field of religious instruction. We are getting not only knowledge but love and practice as well. They are learning how to do the truth in charity."[1]

[1] "The Dawn of a Better Day," George Johnson, *C.E.R.*, September, 1926, vol. xxiv, p. 390.

PART II

THE PROJECT PRINCIPLE APPLIED TO THE TEACHING OF RELIGION

TEACHING TO THINK IN RELIGION

" We have but gathered flowers from many gardens; only the string that binds them together is our own."—MONTAIGNE.

WHEN we read in the Press notices of books about the " new " education, the " new " psychology, and the " new " teaching, we are naturally curious to see them. On perusal our curiosity is transformed into indignation, because the " new " things are not new. It is more humiliating still to go from the latest literature on the " new " education to the *Republic* of Plato, and there find the germinal ideas of the " new " boom explicitly stated. Yet there may be a fresh presentation that frequently captures our attention.

We do not profess to add anything new to the Catechetical Methods which we have outlined. It is our hope, however, to offer a menu card whereon the usual items are in different order. We do not intend to change the diet. The staple food of Christian doctrine has proved itself to be nourishing and sustaining. It has been customary to give our pupils large helpings of Catechism. The pupils have no longer a relish for that dish. The Catechism remains on the menu as a big item, but we hope to serve it with a more appetising dressing. Bible History has frequently been looked upon as an after-course, a dessert. We hope to serve it with the Catechism. The only change in diet that we can boast of is a greater variety of sweetmeats in the expression exercises which we offer.

Training to Think.

Can we get children's minds thinking on religion? We are teaching them much information, but we are not provoking thought. The Jews knew all the formulæ of their religion. They observed all the ritual and ceremonial, the washings, outward signs of fastings, giving of alms, and offering of sacrifices. But they did not think. "All the land is made desolate because there is none who thinketh in his heart." The same charge can be aimed at us to-day. People are thoughtless. They do not think about the big personal topics of life, much less do they think on religion. If we trained the people to think *in corde*, we would dispel much of the sin which springs from thoughtlessness. The world would be a better place to live in, did people think. Sin would decrease, and even impoliteness would be lessened.

Christ certainly made men think. Some of His audience, the Scribes and Pharisees, thought too much. They brooded over His words. This was thinking on the wrong track. How did He set the minds of His audience thinking? Looking around Him, He saw the conditions of man's life, and through familiar illustrations He brought each man face to face with personal problems. Beginning with the ordinary affairs of man's life, He set their minds on a thought excursion. "And they wondered at the eloquence that fell from His lips." Wonder is the beginning of wisdom to Plato. It is taking thought with oneself.

Our problem is with the young child, the adult can look to himself. The lower down we go in the grades the deeper is that problem. The child is thinking all the time "in quantum potest et ille indiget"; we cannot alter that, because "that's how she works." Psychology tells us how the child's mind works in thinking.[1]

We can learn how the child thinks in ordinary subjects. He uses the same apparatus in religion. As religious educators we watch the child mind developing in thought. The

[1] *Cf.* chapter on "Analysis of Thought," pp. 72 *ff.* in *How we Think*, John Dewey.

matter and method must run parallel, neither lagging behind nor outstepping. Method cannot change the nature of the mind. That is fixed by God. Our business is to adjust the method to the mind. If our method is at variance with the way the mind works, the method fails. The child does his own thinking in his own way. St Augustine says the child thinks *qua* child ("puer pueriliter").

Teaching to think in religion is the best preparation for life that we can give our youth. Ideas lead to action. "All effective thinking is creative in the sense that it is not a mere repetition of something learned. It is a variation, an adaptation, an invention. . . . It leads to self-starters."[1]

Our conduct is the fruit of our actions as they are the blooming of our thoughts. Thinking itself is a form of behaviour. If we lead our pupils to think in religion, our work will be a success when tried in the after years. "The end of Catholic education is to produce Catholics who can stand on their own legs apart from any props of custom and environment. Life tries the work of education, of what sort it is. Our effort must be to make something that will last, and for this we must often sacrifice present success in consideration for the future, we must not want to see results."[2]

By teaching them to think in religion, we make them "self-starters." They can go without cranking. The thoughtful alumnus is not likely to dance to the tune of every worldly opinion. He is strong enough in his conviction to stand four-square against the blows of chance, and also against the downward drag of present-day society. "In the Middle Ages," writes Newman, "society sustained the individual, raised him up, and supported him in his higher life. It is society now that drags a man down." All the more reason for a race of "self-starters," who need no cranking or towing. We hope to give them a battery. It is the habit of taking thought in religion. Our aim is to cultivate

[1] *Teaching to Think*, Julius Boraas (Macmillan, N.Y., 1922), p. 14.

[2] *The Education of Catholic Girls*, Janet Erskine Stuart (Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1912), p. 230.

the thinking way through expression, through the doing hand, through projects.

TEACHING TO THINK THROUGH DOING.

(*a*) *It is the Method of Christ.*—" Be ye *doers* of the word, and not hearers only "; " If you know these things you shall be blessed if you *do* them "—these words are a sufficient justification for our plea for more of the doing element in the teaching of religion. The example of Christ, the first Catechist, supports us also. The method of teaching religion employed by Christ may be summarised under three points—*i.e.*, (1) He taught by example: " I am the life." He went about doing good. His life was an example because it was a life of action. (2) He taught by His works: " Go and relate to John what you have seen and heard " was the testimony He appealed to. " Believe My works, if you do not believe My words." He attacked the Scribes and Pharisees because of their inertia; they did nothing to help the people. He warned the people not to be misled by their example. " Not everyone that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that *does* the Will of My Father who is in Heaven." (3) He taught by literal exposition of the truth—*e.g.*, the Sermon on the Mount. Notice the dominance of action, service, doing, in His method.

(*b*) *It is the Method of the Church.*—The Church follows the same method. The Liturgy is a language through which she expresses her innermost thoughts. It is a series of actions, some of them symbolic, others simple. She calls her children to serve. Worship is but the outward expression of the inward faith. The Church realises that religion is for all man, not merely his intellect, but also for his emotions and senses. Christ fashioned a religion to suit the man He created. Christ takes His disciples into the fields, to the hillsides, to the wilderness, by the seashore, to illustrate the truths which He preached by a constant appeal to the imagery which filled their senses. " Behold, I say to you, Lift up your eyes and see the countries, for they are white already to harvest." The Church makes a like appeal

to the spiritual in man, through the senses. The Sacraments are the most spiritual of spiritualising factors, and they are administered through sensible things. They are outward signs of inward graces. By using water, bread, oil, the Church aims at sanctifying and spiritualising the senses, in order to offset and safeguard them from the bombardment of the world. The Church calls on her children to express outwardly what they believe, and in the expression the inner belief is deepened and strengthened.

"Not merely in the perception of ideas, nor even in the vocal expression of those ideas; it consists, above all, in securing outer activity in response to that which is within; it consists in doing. It matters little, for our present purpose, when or where or by whom this view was first put forth. In the ideas of the Church it was no new discovery. It was simply the application to the ordinary school methods of what she has all along practised: 'Not he that sayeth Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he who doeth the Will of My Father.' The Church has never denied that morality and religion must have their seat in the heart; that the interior life of thought and will is essential; and that without this life merely external performance is worthless. But she has also insisted, and she still insists, that religion must have its outward manifestation, if it is to grow as the mind grows and to become a dominant power as the faculties unfold. This is the philosophy that underlies her whole system of worship—a system which is so ordered as to secure, in the most appropriate forms, the expression of our belief. To kneel in adoration, to bow one's head in prayer, to approach the Sacraments as the ritual enjoins, to share in the various observances which mark the seasons of the Ecclesiastical Year—what is all this but the concrete expression of our religious life? And this expression, bodily, external, ceremonial as it is, nevertheless is the best means of cultivating sentiments that are of the soul—inward and spiritual and full of the divine life."[1]

[1] "Modern Psychology and Catholic Education," E. A. Pace, *The Catholic World*, vol. lxxxi, 1905, September, pp. 725-726.

(c) *Modern Psychology Confirms It.*—"No impression without correlative expression" is a modern slogan in education. To William James is due the credit of a newborn interest in the principle.

"The educator should see that every impression should have a correlative expression—this is the great maxim which the teacher ought never to forget. An impression which simply flows in at the pupil's eyes or ears, and in no way modifies his active life, is an impression gone to waste. It is physiologically incomplete. It leaves no fruits behind in the way of capacity gained. . . . The most durable impressions are those on account of which we speak or act, or else are inwardly convulsed. . . . The impression alone is insufficient, because it is the expression of it which deepens the knowledge. . . . The expression is three times more valuable than the impression. We hear the words we have spoken, feel our own blow as we give it, or read in the bystander's eyes the success or failure of our conduct. This return wave of impression pertains to the completeness of the whole experience."[1]

Kant agrees with James: "The very best means of understanding is to perform." And the moderns are in full accord. "All real expression is an outward manifestation of an inward state. . . . Experience shows us that impression is vague and lifeless until it is dowered with life as it issues in expression."[2]

The nature of the child demands expression. "Nothing young is capable of remaining quiet," says Aristotle. A child delights in doing and making things. They find in it a reality which they do not find in words. Expression deepens and completes the impression. "There must be some form of self-expression on the part of the child if any real learning is to take place."[3]

[1] *Talks to Teachers*, William James (Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1899), chapter v, pp. 33-37.

[2] "Primary Methods," T. E. Shields, *C.E.R.*, September, 1918, p. 140.

[3] *The Learning Process*, S. S. Colvin (Macmillan, N.Y., 1922), p. 31.

Expression tests the impression. "Verbal reactions, useful as they are, are insufficient. The pupil's words may be right, but the conceptions corresponding to them are often direfully wrong."[1]

The value of expression work does not consist in teaching the child to do things, but in strengthening and deepening the power of thought. If that point is forgotten, there is no magic in building blocks. No, the value lies in the opening out to its full meaning the thought through action. "It is not the thing that is done that matters, but the quality of mind that goes with the doing."[2]

The Project Principle.

But one may ask, How is this principle of "No impression without correlative expression" to be translated into practice in the schoolroom? The project principle points the way. "At the present moment we need to be jolted out of our conventional, formal school phrases and to find terms better adapted to the educational needs and forces of the hour. The term *project* is a newcomer among educational phrases. It seems to suggest not the school but the shop, not the text-book but the busy mart, the industrial life, the unhallowed things of the schemer and the promoter. Perhaps this is its merit, that it forces attention upon things that have come to importance in life, things which need to break over the threshold into the school."[3]

But what is a project? McMurry answers: "The word 'project' denotes something objective and concrete. But back of this, its real meaning lies in an idea, in something thought out and clearly conceived, first as a mental product, later to be worked over and transformed into a concrete reality. The synonyms for the word *project* are *scheme, plan, design.* In this sense the project is first of all a clear, clean-cut,

[1] *Talks to Teachers*, William James, p. 34.
[2] *How we Think*, John Dewey, p. 167.
[3] *Teaching by Projects*, C. A. McMurry (Macmillan, N.Y., 1922), p. 10.

intellectual grasp of a whole complex situation. It corresponds to the well-worked-out design of the architect, which expresses the plan of a great building. . . . In the idea of the project lies also the impulse to realise it, to carry out the purpose clearly conceived—for example, the sinking of a shaft for the purpose of exploiting a coal bed. This demand for clear thinking as a basis for later action, leading on naturally to a complete accomplishment, makes the project an ideal basis for teaching and for lesson planning. The project sets up something clear and complete in thought, but lacking in fulfilment. It sets up the demand for full realisation, and this is a dynamic quality which energises effort in the right direction."[1]

Kilpatrick answers the question: "Projects may present every variety that purposes present in life."[2]

Its philosophy is motivated work. Project is a new name, but this kind of educative process is described by other names, such as the problem method, the learning-by-doing method, the learning-through-experience method, motivation, teaching to think, and others. It is not a new method. It is rather the emergence into clearer consciousness of a new point of view in education.

The Herbartian approach is from without. The teacher's problem is: How can I make the lesson interesting? The lesson is arranged in a nice serial order and "sugar-coated" with devices, rewards, and contests. By these aids the teacher tries to force its lodgement in the pupil's mental storehouse. That method flows naturally from Herbart's doctrine of interest. The project approaches the child from within, through a felt need, a personal problem, which means that we make the child interested rather than make the lesson interesting. The teacher does not ask: "How can I teach this lesson in religion?" but: "How can I help John to be more thoughtful and interested in his religion?" "This shift of attention from material to be used to the

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 13.

[2] *The Project Method*, W. H. Kilpatrick (Teachers' College, N.Y., 1918), p. 3.

pupil's problem is a great gain for good teaching in the Church schools."[1]

The project cannot be classed as revolutionary. It lays the old ways of teaching under tribute, and it adds a fresh outlook to the combination. The formal Herbartian steps are no longer considered the standard of respectability in teaching. "All the techniques of good teaching in religious education are to be ready for immediate use when needed in the carrying forward of a project. That is, they are not used in formal steps, as we have so often pointed out.[2] Projects are so varied, so complex, so overlap one upon the other, that to direct a teacher always to begin with a story, then ask questions, then lecture, then make application, then test, and so on, is out of the question."[3]

"Eliciting" in the Herbartian sense is not practised, and the "application" is not a final separate stage, but is woven in as the shuttlecock of interest flashes up and down the project.

The teacher is expected to acquire an attitude rather than a technique, a new approach rather than a new way of teaching. "One might view the art of the teacher as finding expression in the various types of lessons or recitations."[4]

It is our contention that children can be trained to think in religion through the doing hand or expression work. The advocates of the project principle claim that the "expression" is the surest road to set the pupils thinking. "If thinking is an 'inner' behaviour which began as an 'outer' behaviour, we shall expect to find that it can best be developed by beginning with practical situations."[5]

McMurry accepts this as a first principle: "Educationally considered we believe a child is at his best when planning

[1] *The Project Principle in Religious Education*, E. L. Shaver (Chicago, 1926), p. iii.

[2] *Ibid.*, *cf.* pp. 16, 48, 128.

[3] *Ibid.*, E. L. Shaver, p. 138.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 127.

[5] *Teaching to Think*, Julius Boraas (Macmillan, N.Y., 1922), p. 34.

and executing his own projects, or at least those which engage his full powers."[1]

Teaching Religion by Projects.

The project principle has established itself in the exclusive society of educational practice. The conservative element of that group cannot shrug its shoulders and condemn this idea as a piece of pedagogical nonsense. Judged by its fruits, the idea has won out. Collings shows, in *An Experiment with a Project Curriculum*, how successful an experiment carried on for three years with a one-room rural school in Missouri was, in developing community enterprise, in creating civic habits and skill, and in securing a balanced fund of information to the student body.[2]

McMurry proves that the idea is not impossible, bizarre as the scheme may appear at first blush. Projects are made a basis of purposeful study. A glance at the Table of Contents rewards the enquirer with a generous provision of examples of completed projects, and with a detailed introduction to the technique of projects within and without the classroom.[3]

But may we apply it to the teaching of religion? The sponsors of the idea answer an enthusiastic, Yes. Kilpatrick finds "the possibilities for building moral character in a régime of purposeful activities one of the strongest points in its favour."[4]

It has been applied to the teaching of religion. One worker in the field of religious education claims several years of success with the principle. In *The Project Principle in Religious Education* we find the detailed plans of three projects that have been successfully worked by the author (*cf.* pp. 85-98); a hundred suggested projects, some of which

[1] *Teaching by Projects*, C. A. McMurry (Macmillan, N.Y., 1922), p. 10.

[2] *An Experiment with a Project Curriculum*, E. Collings (Macmillan, N.Y., 1923).

[3] *Teaching by Projects*, C. A. McMurry, (Macmillan, N.Y., 1924).

[4] *The Project Method*, W. H. Kilpatrick (*Teachers' College Bulletin*, N.Y., 1918), p. 13.

have been worked by him (*cf.* pp. 69-76); a source list of public-school projects having suggestive value for religious education is added as an appendix (*cf.* pp. 181-183). In addition we have detailed descriptions of actual project teaching in *Church School Projects* and *Young People's Projects*.[1]

Religious Education,[2] vol. xxi (October, 1926), is devoted to the project principle as applied to the teaching of religion. Examples of project teaching at work are given in pp. 485-527. The projects described are typical and cover a wide range—*e.g.*, in camping, in higher education, in the church school, in the vacation school, among races, etc.

In our treatment of "The Shields Method" we drew attention to the projects we observed at work in the Shields Memorial School. The director of the school proclaims his faith in the principle: "Provision for experience in the classroom, by way of construction work, projects, and imaginative play, will repay the teacher richly. Last year our First Graders were much distressed at the thought that there was no house for Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem, and that Jesus had to live in a stable. They expressed a desire to make a house for the Holy Family. They fashioned it out of a packing-box, cut windows in the sides, made a little table and three chairs, modelled dishes out of clay, and painted them with gay colours. They carried out the project as free activity, working on it individually or in little groups, whenever they could spare time from their regular work. It held their attention throughout the year and was their proudest possession. And all the while it was an external symbol of the house they were building in their hearts. It made the Saviour intensely real to them. Theirs was something of the joy and profit that always comes to those who do creative work for Him."[3]

[1] *The Project Principle in Religious Education, Church School Projects, Young People's Projects*, E. L. Shaver (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago).

[2] *The Journal of the Religious Education Association of America*, 308, North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A.

[3] "A Fundamental Principle in the Teaching of Religion," George Johnson, *C.E.R.*, October, 1926, vol. xxiv, pp. 461-462.

OUR PROJECTS.

In this chapter we have indicated that we offer no " new " method to those already outlined. We do not propose that the canons of sound pedagogy are to be discarded or neglected now. Our contribution, if we may in justice use the word, is to suggest " another way " along which the pupil may come in search of Catholic truth. The problem is not how we are to present Christian doctrine to him, but how we wish him to approach it.

Our thesis is that the child is taught to think through doing things. But to teach a child to think in and on and about his faith is the goal we seek in religious education. Therefore, let us provide the opportunities for expression work, the training ground for thought, in Christian doctrine.

The three big divisions of our subject are doctrine, Sacred Scripture, and liturgy, especially the Mass. We adopt the concentric plan and divide the programme into three cycles, as *The Sower* Scheme does—*i.e.*, the infant school (five to eight), the middle school (eight to twelve), the high school (twelve and after). We have carried through projects in three divisions of the subject to suit the children of the three cycles. The remaining pages are devoted to descriptions of, and suggestions in, the working out of the following projects:

Doctrine.

1. The home-made Catechism (eight to twelve years).
2. The pupil's note-book (twelve and after).

Sacred Scripture.

1. The picture-book (five to eight years).
2. To make and use a model of Palestine (eight to twelve years).
3. The reading Scripture project (twelve and after).

The Mass.

1. To make a class picture-book (five to eight years).
2. (*a*) To make and equip a model sanctuary.
   (*b*) To make a pupil's Mass book.
   (*c*) A class drama on the Mass.
3. A series of projects.
   (*a*) A reference book on the Mass.
   (*b*) A Mass outfit.
   (*c*) Study circles.
   (*d*) A Mass club.
   (*e*) A school Altar Society.
   (*f*) A weekly calendar.
   (*g*) A parents' day at school.
   (*h*) The use of the Missal.

1. Projects in Doctrine.

The Home-made Catechism Project.

"This *Summa* of the people is the most comprehensive, the most profound, the most logical, the most valuable book in the English language."—Cardinal Vaughan.

We call the middle grades (eight to twelve years) the Catechism years, because the Catechism is the prescribed text for the teaching of religion during that period. Be the text good, bad, or indifferent, we accept it because it is the authorised book, and now face the situation of making the most of it. It is a text that must be known thoroughly, because it is a necessary basis for future work. Parts of it are to be memorised, because a Catechism is something to be learned. It is not a story-book to be merely read through. It is the text that is to cover four years of the child's religious education.

What do we want from the teacher of this period? The Catechism is to be the core, and around it Bible History and instructions are to gather as tributary agencies, ministering aids, explanatory and illustrative subjects. We want to teach the Catechism thoroughly, but to do so in such

a manner as to leave room for other things. It must not usurp all the teaching time. From its use we want a knowledge that will lead to God, not merely a knowing about God, but a knowing that blossoms forth in conduct. We wish to capture the whole child, not only his intelligence, but his affections and will. Memorising is not to be looked down upon as a dishonoured practice, but we wish to make it purposive. For most children the Catechism years are monotonous, the years of famine. We hope to make them interesting, the years of plenty, during which they will gather in by handfuls, like the Egyptians, and be prepared to face the work of the upper grades with their minds richly stored.

We must not want to see results quickly. Judged by the gramophone standard of parrot-memorising, we shall probably score a lower mark than formerly. Judged by life, we shall score high. It will be a slow process, but growth is always slow.

The teacher will talk less and teach more. The children will listen less and do more.

The Project, a Home-made Catechism in Four Volumes.

We accept *The Sower* Scheme principle of beginning with the Catechism in the eighth year, and finishing with it as a text-book in the twelfth year. Children come fresh to its formal answers. Our problem is to teach the Catechism in such a way that the children master it in four years. The solution may be found in the following project.

The essential point is that the children are to make, as they go along, their own Catechisms in close contact with the printed Catechisms. The whole Catechism is to be covered in four years. A portion is ascribed to each year, making four divisions. The doctrinal summaries are guided by the teacher. Absolute freedom is given to each child to comment, to decorate, and to illustrate his own book. It is a plan open to all children, not one for the gifted child. Give any group of children a reasonable freedom of expression and the plan is bound to succeed. A few weeks'

trial will convince teachers that they have found the pleasant and fruitful way for themselves and for the class. There is joy in the doing.

The Book in the Making.

There are three possible courses open to the teacher in the making of the book. We have used all of them. (1) The first is that the children should make the book at a hand-work lesson. A few sheets of heavy paper—foolscap is admirable—are folded and cut. The covers are of card-board. Some children used with effect the covers of illustrated catalogues, others had linoleum of bright colours, while some used stiff paper with cloth covering. Cotton thread and a darning-needle fastened all together with big stitches down the back. (2) The second is to select a suitable note-book with plain and lined leaves, the one for gum, the other for writing. (3) A third way uses the Catechism text. By unfastening the back pins the book is taken asunder and leaves are interlarded between the pages of the text. Each page of text has a blank space for comments and illustrations. In the centre of the text there are several extra leaves for gum work. The book is then covered with stiff covers.

First Volume.—In the first year (age eight to nine) the book is mainly a picture album. The illustrations recall the whole of the religious teaching and not merely the doctrinal side. The child is free to select pictures and paste them in as he pleases. Sometimes appropriate extracts from the Catechism may be inserted beneath the pictures. Catechism answers are written beneath the picture which the child considers most appropriate. Outlines of the Bible stories of the pictures are added. Frequently a child likes to add a word of comment or explanation beside his pictures—for example, a little boy wrote beside the picture of the Scourging at the Pillar, "Why don't they let Him alone?" It was a revelation of the child's sympathy and feeling. But many children will not have time for these expressions of thought. The first volume is an initiation, and consequently must be kept simple and easy.

Second Volume—In the second year (age nine to ten) it is possible to arrange the work in better order. We can plan with the class, so that there is room for the various parts. Catechism answers and comments, Bible History stories, Mysteries of the Rosary, instructions on the Mass, an occasional hymn and prayer according to individual tastes—all can be provided for by a little thought in apportioning the parts.

Third Volume.—In the third year (age ten to eleven) the book grows in bulk. There are three divisions, doctrine, the Mass, Bible History. The doctrinal explanations were fuller. Some children added appropriate texts of Scripture to justify the doctrine. Others had extracts from reference books. The comments were more individual and personal than earlier years. Through those comments one sees the child's mind is thinking, meditating, and thus revealing itself. Each book is different. The Mass and Bible stories are copiously illustrated. From Catholic booksellers' catalogues the many things used at Mass—*e.g.*, altar, missal, stand, chalice, paten, cruets, pyx, sanctuary lamp, vestments, monstrance, cope—are cut out and pasted in. Under the pasted pictures in Bible History a text is added, usually from Sacred Scripture, but occasionally an original composition, a verse, a sketch map gives a personal touch.

Fourth Volume.—In the fourth year (age eleven to twelve) the book is larger, more elaborate, and more artistic. It is the fruit of the drawing lessons. The cover is designed; the printing, headings, and illustrations are original. We have found it better to write this book in sections—say, two sections to doctrine, two sections to Bible History, and two sections to prayers, liturgy, and the Mass. When the sections are written, they are bound in hard covers as an exercise in hand-work, done during that period. When the time for binding came, all may not have finished the sections. On the blank pages it can be indicated by pencil marks what is to be written on them. In this book space is made for an index, and then we have a very satisfactory volume. Short essays are a marked feature of this book. There is

much scope for personal expression on Biblical events. Some children wrote short dramas, others gave real examples taken from their own experience—*e.g.*, on the efficacy of the Mass. Sketches, pictures, designs, maps, verses, original compositions, extracts, and a good dose of scissors and paste made the fourth book a personal possession. Quaint remarks and illustrations, for which the children are individually responsible, showed that in this class religion was a necessary and a joyful part of the children's lives. Throughout this year we encourage originality and freedom of expression.

"THE SOWER" INSPIRATION.

We are indebted to three articles in *The Sower* on "The Middle School," by A. M. Scarre, for the inspiration of this big project. In our working out of the idea, we have differed in details of method. Our teachers differ considerably in the application of the idea: some prefer to make the actual book, others prefer the *companion notebook*, which eventually takes the place of the text, while others use the interlarded leaves scheme. Miss A. M. Scarre outlines the aim of the project: "The books are intended as a basis of method for all the religious teaching in the middle school—*i.e.*, from about eight to twelve years. The main business of teaching during the period is to give a good foundation of doctrinal knowledge in such a way as to permit of its individual application. We take, then, the doctrine assigned to each year, and the parts of the Catechism connected with it. As this doctrine is taught by direct instruction or by story, its summary in the appropriate Catechism answer is learnt largely by having it written first on the blackboard, and then by each child in his book. The writing itself helps in memorisation, especially as it is well understood first."[1]

The result claimed is worth seeking. "The gain to both teacher and children by this method is considerable. Class

[1] "The Middle School—III," A. M. Scarre, *The Sower*, June, 1921, No. 25, p. 8.

teaching, though by no means abolished, has its very proper part in the scheme, is reduced in amount, to the physical benefit of the teacher and the happiness of the class. There is time for that upon which the whole method is based: individual work on the part of the teacher, individual attention by the teacher. Moreover, there is abundant outlet for activity in the book-making, and an entire absence of boredom."[1]

Another writer in the same issue of *The Sower* appraises the aim, though seeking it in another way. "The Christian Faith must be *taught*, and only advanced scholars are capable of working out problem lessons from original sources. In the infant and junior school the teacher must present the material by word of mouth to graded classes, stories for the little ones, narrative and discussion as the reason develops, but in the ideal lesson the teacher's part will occupy less time than the child's. All such lessons should be followed up by the child's individual expression work, when that silent absorption, which so delights Madame Montessori, may be seen in full flower; then the teacher passes from child to child and receives *individual* accounts and summaries of the lesson as she discusses his work with the child."[2]

The Editor of *The Sower* adds an interesting comment on the project: "Miss Scarre's idea has the simplicity combined with the infinite possibilities which is the mark of a genuine first-class idea. Why didn't we ever think of it before? It has all the characteristics of a real teaching method. The making of the book provides a permanent aim for the religious instruction time (it must not be confused with mere expression work, for it is the work itself). It keeps the children occupied, gives them a chance to be *doing* something, and doing it at their own pace, gives much scope for individual differences of enterprise and ability, and for the right sort of emulation, and leaves them a sort

[1] "The Middle School—III," A. M. Scarre, *The Sower*, June, 1921, No. 25, p. 9.

[2] "Expression Work in Religious Education," Judith F. Smith, *The Sower*, June, 1921, No. 25, pp. 5-6.

of leisure for thinking over things (and children do think if they are allowed to). Its advantages to the teacher are just as evident; it relieves him of the strain of many class lessons, or of keeping order in a class which is not properly occupied, and it gives him full leisure to watch and observe and go round the class individually with his suggestions, and hints, and information, and encouragement—in short, to practise the art of incidental teaching under the most favourable conditions."[1]

Having given the project a year's trial, the headmistress of a primary school wrote to *The Sower* in 1922: " We make our own Catechisms, and though we get along more slowly, it makes up for this by making the Catechism known, understood, and *loved*, and it enters the memory by the right road of interest, and stays there for ever. There is no need for constant revision of memorising."

The Project—A Pupil's Note-book.

In the advanced grades—*i.e.*, twelve and after—we have carried out the project of a pupil's note-book in close contact witht he text in hand. Each pupil in every year of these classes had a note-book summary of the work done. For the successful carrying out of this project we offer suggestions in two divisions—*i.e.* I. The Teacher's Part: the Blackboard; and II, The Pupil's Part: the Note-Book. All the catechetical methods we have outlined stress the importance of both. The Munich Method necessarily makes much of the teaching opportunities offered by both. The Yorke Method advocates the note-book habit in teachers and taught. *The Sower* Scheme appeals for an increased expenditure on chalk for the Christian doctrine classes. Blackboard and note-book enter so fully into all methods that we may be pardoned for seizing this appropriate occasion to make some observations.

[1] " Editorial Notes," *The Sower*, June, 1921, No. 25, pp. 3-4. *Cf.* " The Middle School—I," A. M. Scarre, *The Sower*, March, 1921. " The Middle School—II," A. M. Scarre, *The Sower*, May, 1921. " The Middle School—III," A. M. Scarre, *The Sower*, June, 1921.

I. *The Teacher's Part: the Blackboard.*

The Blackboard in Christian Doctrine.—The blackboard has not received its due place in the teaching of religion. We seem to consider it a waste of time to call on its aid in the teaching of doctrine, Bible History, or liturgy. "There is no reason, indeed, why the blackboard should not prove as many-sided a tool in Christian doctrine as in many of the other branches taught in the schools."[1]

Its use is open to all teachers. Writing, drawing, illustrative work on the blackboard are within the powers of all teachers, even those who have no taste for drawing as an art. "A teacher should never hesitate to draw because he thinks himself an incompetent draughtsman. The question is, can he make his meaning clear in line, when words would probably fail? If he can accomplish that, no member of his class will pass judgement on his draughtsmanship."[2]

In all the work of the school the blackboard is the teacher's ally. Its use spares the teacher's voice. There is no proportion in a class if all is done through talking. The parts of a subject do not receive justice. Much energy is expended, but much of it goes waste. A teacher needs to economise his voice; there is always the danger of over-doing it. The blackboard is an anchor for the restless mind of the child. The strain of attention is lessened by having the summary of the lesson on the blackboard. One stick of chalk is worth a bushel of words.

Use the Blackboard in your Teaching Stride.—When are we to use the blackboard? Use it in your teaching stride, not merely at the beginning or at the end of a lesson. The ordinary use of the blackboard is of a temporary character, produced at the psychological moment to make or fix a mental impression. Let the board summary or diagram grow with the lesson, not prepared beforehand and placed before the class as complete. Children esteem the rough

[1] *Spirago's Method of Christian Doctrine*, p. 317.

[2] *A Primer of Teaching Practice*, J. A. Green and C. Birchenough Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1911), pp. 218-219.

summary made during the lesson much more than the elaborate one planned beforehand and then presented. "Occasionally the teacher will have to do more painstaking work, but ordinarily his success in work of this kind will depend upon the ease and naturalness with which it is done. The accomplished teacher does not draw attention to his technique by saying, 'Now I shall put that on the blackboard,' and allow a long pause to follow whilst he fulfils his promise. The word, the drawing, the formula, the figures—all appear as they are wanted, as if they were inevitable."[1]

Use the blackboard frequently, but never for long at a time. Even while working at it do not lose contact with the class, but keep in touch with them through questioning. When the teacher goes to the blackboard, it should not be a time of relaxation for the class.

The Blackboard is the Teacher's Hoarding.—Use the blackboard as the hoarding on which to advertise your wares. In newspaper headings and clever advertisements, the aim is to pack the whole article into a phrase that strikes one. We can learn much from the advertisers in preparing our fare for the class. The normal use of the board calls for big, bold, simple writing and drawing. The newspaper poster is a good model. A sentence, sometimes a single word, is printed in bold, arresting letters. It catches the eye of the passer-by, who notices this challenging advertisement, unweakened by other minor headings. At the blackboard, remember you are writing for the whole class, and not merely for the children in the front row. Whatever the children are expected to read from the board must be written boldly. Coloured chalk can be used frequently.

The blackboard contains only a little, clearly written. Too many details on it are a mistake. It can only serve those who have been present all the time, and for whom each word is pregnant with suggestion.

Make the summary follow a visible order on the board. Get the key-phrases down in order, under the big headings. Often a single word expresses the substance of some minutes'

[1] *A Primer of Teaching Practice*, Green and Birchenough, p. 217.

explanation. A key-phrase is like a good cork, it absorbs. Key-phrases are like pegs on which to hang the lesson. Let the actual spacing out show the connection of points of a lesson. This gives the class a sense of order which tells on everything. It is reproduced in the pupil's note-book. The child gets an idea of a plan. It is so constantly before them on the board that to plan anything comes quite naturally. They learn to plan unconsciously.

There is a wide field for the board in the explanation of the Catechism answers to be learned. By setting out on the board, sentence by sentence or phrase by phrase, the Catechism answer, the memorising is easier and more effective. *E.g.*, take definitions; the essential elements may be spaced out on the board, as:

1. Outward sign
2. Inward grace
3. Institution by Christ

} = a Sacrament

Most of the answers in the Catechism may be so spaced out.

Diagrams and Sketches.—Diagrams and illustrative work are within the powers of all teachers. "The first requisite is not graphic skill, but merely the *habit* of making marks on the board *while one talks*. Chalk-talk is not exclusively for those who draw well, but for every teacher who has courage enough or ambition enough to make a chalk-mark on the blackboard. The teacher should be a *chalk-talker*. If she fears to draw lest her pictures be not artistic, she will lose the immense advantages that accrue from even the rudest attempts to make visible the ideas she wishes to convey."[1]

But, for those who can draw quickly and easily, rapid chalk-pictures—original or based on well-known work—will lighten many a Scripture lesson and push home many a doctrine lesson. For example, we can depict the Hail Mary in three sketches: The Angel Gabriel saluting our Lady as "Hail, full of grace!"; St Elizabeth receiving the Blessed Virgin as "Blessed art thou . . ."; and finally the little child in

[1] Professor Kenyon.

prayer at the feet of the glorious Virgin with her Divine Child—" Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners." Many teachers can do this sort of thing, and, of course, the opportunities are limitless. Sketch and diagram can be used effectively by any teacher. They are great allies in the quick and lasting assimilation of religious truth. In *The Sower* of December, 1920, No. 19, there are some suggestions which we have used with advantage.[1]

Use of Symbolism.—Added to all this there is a wide field for symbolism. " In fact, there are no limits to the possibilities of blackboard symbolism for a teacher, who is prepared to think it out and make full and reverent use of it to set forth the mysteries of Faith."[2] The Editor of *The Sower* indicates some of these possibilities in the page of symbolism he adds to *Teaching the Catechism.*

The appeal of symbolism lies in the pleasurable feeling that you are interpreting something for yourself. Watch our children of to-day keenly interested in contesting who knows the make of an automobile from the shape of the bonnet. They are endeavouring to read the manufacturer's symbolism.

The use of symbols is hallowed by Christ in the institution of the Sacraments. The outward sign became the symbol of the inward grace. The Church has followed that example from the days of the Catacombs to the present hour.[3]

St Augustine counsels the catechist to use the symbolism of the Sacraments so that he may exercise the mind of the pupil. Mysteries or allegories are to be used as incentives to make the pupil use his head. They appeal to the child and therefore are to be fully used in catechetics: " And as

[1] " The Blackboard," A. M. Scarre, pp. 104-107. *Cf.* also " Teaching the Catechism," the Editor of *The Sower*, pp. 119-120; *To the Heart of the Child*, Josephine Van Dyke Brownson; *Spirago's Method of Christian Doctrine*, pp. 320-331.

[2] " The Blackboard," A. M. Scarre, *The Sower*, December, 1920, p. 106.

[3] *Catholic Customs and Symbols*, H. T. Henry (Benziger, N.Y., 1925), is a popular collection and explanation of the varied forms and figures of Catholic usage.

regards the actual value of a hidden meaning, from which these writings derive their name of mysteries, and the power of these concealed oracles to sharpen the desire for truth and to shake off the torpor induced by surfeit, such men must have this shown them by actual experience, wherein something which failed to stir them when set plainly before them is brought to light by the unravelling of some allegory."[1]

The Church has always used symbolism to attract her children. "The great mosaics and frescoes of olden days were aids to teaching perhaps prior to being modes of decoration. The symbolism of the cathedral was understood by the worshipper, and the edifice was a prayer-book even for him who had never learned his letters. The value of objective teaching, keenly appreciated by the Church in every age, is celebrated as one of the major discoveries of modern education. Here is an instance where tradition and progress agree on a fundamental truth. Children love symbolism, and a wise programme of religious education will not overlook its promise."[2]

II. *The Pupil's Part: The Note-book.*

"When I wish to help little boys to see the might and beauty of poetry, I do not discourse upon poetics. As a play master I know it is more practical to start the whole miracle with the one word '*MAKE.*' You must fall straight away upon the actual work, and you will find out what you are doing as you go along. More and more you feel what you ought to do, and now and then, if you are lucky, you manage to do it. And all the time, of course, you have a sympathy and understanding with the art-doings of others, whether these others be the past-masters of your craft or merely your fellow-prentices."[3]

The teacher leaves the centre of the stage. On the hoarding of the blackboard he has done his part. His contribution

[1] *De Catechizandis Rudibus*, St Augustine, chapter ix, p. 43.

[2] "The Liturgy as a Form of Educational Experience," George Johnson, *C.E.R.*, November, 1926, vol. xxiv, p. 534.

[3] *The Play Way.*

has been to summarise in a condensed phrase the main points of the lesson. Giving a definite name to a thing is of immense value in life. Begin early, then. The substance of a paragraph may be often expressed in a single sentence. The text-book frequently supplies such a sentence, which may be used with modifications. Going through the text, synthetising the main thought in each paragraph or group by headlines, would greatly lessen the work of revision. Put those key-phrases on the board. They will open the gateways of retention. They are pegs on which to hang future lessons. They are like good corks, they absorb the essence of the explanation. The blackboard and the pupil's note-book are the teacher's best allies in securing an attentive, active class.

The teacher moves about the class giving individual help. The note-book is planned with the class. The main idea is that each child is to write out a summary of the doctrine, instead of merely learning it from the lips of the teacher, or from a text-book. The blackboard summary is the model. The teacher's work is to guide the pupil in making the summary. The note-book is to be the child's own doctrinal text-book. An entrance test for matter is necessary—*e.g.*, "Does this explain the doctrine in question?" "Does it help me to understand it better?" Lay the decision of the fitness of matter on the individual child, and make him justify what he includes in his note-book. We have seen many filled note-books, but most of the matter was mere padding—the words of hymns, long extracts copied verbatim from the Catechism, prayers. There is an art in note-taking which must be explained and taught. If a child is guided at first, seeing the summary on the board, and questioning all matter that seeks a place with *cui bono*, gradually the note-taking will become a personal, individual matter. As we go up the grades, we can expect more of the personal summaries. In the lower divisions, note-taking is of a different order.

A Credit System.—The teacher will act as a guide, as an accountant, but also as an awarder of merit. Give credit

for the daily storage of the pupil. At first it will be necessary to plan and guide the storage, and consequently there is not much occasion for praise. When the pupils get in on the idea, we should stimulate them. We have used with fruitful results a public system of crediting the work of the pupils' note-books. We set up a system of marking, allotting so many marks to each phase of note-taking, giving the biggest credit to individual comments. The results were displayed in a graph which the class worked. Pupils of all ages respond to merited praise. Note-taking is a very useful habit to inculcate, and, consequently, let it loom large in the school life.

The pupil occupies the centre of the stage from this on. He is face to face with a project. The making of the note-book is his own job. It is up to him to make the best one he can. The urge to do is from within. It is a different approach from the Herbartian step of "Preparation," which comes from without. He is to do something, and it is to be a personal doing. The doing is to be the main problem, and not a mere tailpiece or afterthought tacked on loosely as expression work to a lesson.

The "Gang Age."—The board summary is the work of teacher with class. The high school years—*i.e.*, twelve and after—are called the "gang age." Children want to go in packs. There is a spirit of camaraderie present—all hunting up material for each one, and each working for the whole—a truly co-operative society. It may seem a waste of time, but experience will prove its worth. *Festina lente* (Make haste slowly) is a safe and sure principle in teaching. Nature does not grow in leaps and bounds. The precocious child has frequently to retrace the steps of a hurried flight in school. In planning the board summary, ask and encourage contributions. Put them down on the board. A single word will recall the individual suggestion. The chief thing is to acknowledge his effort publicly, and that will stimulate others. Those scattered ideas are knit together in order, and from them emerges the final set of key-phrases.

The teacher censures the doctrinal summaries in the note-books. The child is then free to make the note-book a personal treasure. Encourage him to look upon his note-book as a means of better understanding the matter taught, as a useful reference book, and also as a life keepsake for the after-school years. With those aims before him, the note-book will assume an honoured place in his estimation. Appeal to them to make their books as beautiful as possible—pictures, symbolism, appropriate texts of Scripture, prayers, verses, comments, sketches, extracts, essays, Bible History references, original poems—in fact, everything that tends to make a book a personal complication, and therefore to ensure the personal application of such religious truths as are being taught. The note-books can contain in various sections doctrine, Bible History, instructions, etc. A subject index will make it a more serviceable instrument, and at the same time afford a fruitful exercise in cross-cutting through the matter.

Advantages of the Note-book.—Anything that is worth doing is worth recording, and helps the memory. Much of the hard work done at the beginning of the year is wasted because there is no storage for it. Coming to the end of the year, we have nothing in hand unless there is a record kept. The note-book saves much wear and tear at the end of the year. There is no waste. It begets confidence in the class. They see that the work has been done, even though they do not know it sufficiently well for an examination. It provides for fresh repetitions. The repetition *ad nauseam*, which sends the child over and over the same old track, kills interest. The varied and progressive repetition *ad gaudium* gives something new each going-over.

The teacher who invents excuses for repetition gets results. It is not enough to repeat. It is also necessary to revive and renew the knowledge to which we refer. When a section of the note-book has been finished, it is not to be laid away as in archives. Use it in many ways, as a reference book, to which the pupil is sent regularly to look up notes when similar points arise in the lesson. Stimulate them by

cross-questions which necessitate the personal activity of looking things up. The class is independent of the book, and learns the subject-matter from its homespun text. The learning is secured by the doing. It is not easy to digest the predigested work of another. The pupil is using what he has personally tabulated and summarised. The work is slower than if the teacher dictated it, but it is better known. The mere fact of tabulating matter and putting it in order helps the learning of it. It is a preparation in the class, with all the class using the open text-book, open reference books, the blackboard summary, and the self-made schematic plan. It never exacts details prematurely, but awaits for the complete and expedite knowledge by the class as the final goal of intellectual effort.

Finally, there is the joy of the artist in creating this note-book, which shall be a thing of beauty and a joy for ever to its maker.

2. Projects in Sacred Scripture.

We have applied the project principle to the teaching of Sacred Scripture, in three cycles—viz.:

First cycle (five to eight years): to make and use a picture-book.

Second cycle (eight to twelve years): to make and use a model of Palestine.

Third cycle (twelve and upwards): a Scripture-reading project.

First Cycle Project: To Make and Use a Picture-Book.

Each child will make a picture-book. We follow the plan already outlined in the home-made Catechism project. A plain paper exercise-book or a small drawing-book is very serviceable. A packet of Old and New Testament pictures, now so cheaply produced in colours, and a box of crayons furnish the necessary equipment.

The child cuts the white edgings off the pictures and pastes them into the book. She is free to decorate the

borders with paint, crayon, or ink as she pleases. Another way of using the little pictures is to cut out the principal figures and paste them in the book at a greater distance apart than in the original, and then fill in a suitable background. In this way a good full-page illustration may be produced.

Under each picture, or, better still, on the blank page opposite, the child is to be encouraged to add an inscription or commentary. It will be a revelation to the teacher to read those personal commentaries. They are the evidences of the child's thinking, frequently showing a quick understanding of the inner meaning of the picture. We have seen some that expressed the idea perfectly. Beneath the inscription or commentary, have them copy a short account of what the picture conveys, from the Bible History or textbook in use. A verse of a hymn or a prayer often gives an apt summary. In copying the story, encourage them to use the Scriptural words.

At the end of the term the books are covered, each child selecting his own design and pattern. The decorations are usually quite characteristic, and, coupled with the commentary, they give us a glimpse into the child's wonderland of imagination. It is evident that the compositions and the decorations have been done by children who have loved the doing of them and the story which preceded them, and who have vividly realised them. We have known little children devote part of their play-time with a box of paints to beautifying their picture-books. We have seen picture-books done by children of these grades that will be cherished as life-keepsakes.

Pictures are "Windows into Heaven."

The advantage of this picture-book project is the splendid opportunity it affords of teaching the children of this age to learn stories from their pictures, to love them, and to dramatise them. Children think mostly in pictures. In forming their impressions and ideas, they depend on visualisation. It is of the utmost importance that this visualisa-

tion, especially in the sacred matter of religion, should be of the right sort. And, consequently, as they cannot create the right kind of visualisation out of nothing in their inner consciousness, it is necessary that they should see pictures, and that the pictures are of the right kind. The quickest and surest way to reach the child's soul is through the child's eye. Pictures make plain what words fail to explain. Beautiful pictures are painted prayers. They will hang for life on memory's walls.

All nature shows how God speaks to us in beautiful pictures. The use of pictures is eminently Catholic. It is the Church's own way. In olden times, when books were not so much read, and when faith seemed stronger than now, pictures were used very considerably to teach the truths of the Gospel. To-day the Church employs them in the liturgy. Our statues are pictures. The Stations of the Cross, the pageant of ceremonial, the Crib at Christmas—all appeal to the soul through the eyes. The modern newspaper uses the picture as a powerful means of propagating its views. There is a philosophy depicted in the front page cartoon. At first it gives but a visual impression, then the point of it dawns on one. The idea is pleasant, and more effective than columns of solemn editorial. The Church has been and remains the patroness of art, because art will lead her children upwards to appreciate the ideals that inspired it.

" Our mediæval ancestors were wise when they beautified their churches with ' storied windows.' The same idea underlies the use of mystery plays in the Middle Ages."[1]

There is no scarcity of good pictures to-day. We do not suffer from lack of suitable teaching material, but, perhaps, we are not using it fully. " People look at pictures with their ears rather than with their eyes " was the complaint of an old Chinese artist. Mr. Harold Copping calls his artistic presentations of Old and New Testament scenes " pictures that teach."

Pictures fulfil their mission when we guide and encourage

[1] *The Way into the Kingdom* (a *Sower* publication), p. 51.

children how to observe them, to talk about them, to direct them what to look for—*e.g.*, the setting, the dress, the persons. In the advanced classes the proper use of pictures should send children to consult some commentary on Scripture.

Pictures open the door of the imagination, giving the child something to build upon. "It is not so much the individual pictures conveyed by the teacher to the children that matter, as the endless series of mental pictures to which they give a lead."[1]

It was that faith in the picture to lead from earth to Heaven which impelled the great Dominican artist, Fra Angelico, to paint in each bare cell of the Monastery of San Marco a fresco on the wall. He spoke of them as "Windows into Heaven," because he intended them as helps to his brothers' spiritual vision. "Let us remember that spiritual visualisation is a very real part of religion. Let our religious instruction make use of it and develop it. . . . Let us remember that a beautiful and ever-present vision is better than a word-perfect knowledge of the Catechism."[2]

Stories Form the Daily Bread.

In this cycle stories form the daily bread of children in religious instruction. We advocate the project of making a picture-book, because that activity gives the story a richer context. Pictures are aids we employ to make up for our deficiencies as story-tellers. "To be able to tell a story vividly is a very important accomplishment for a teacher; and the more 'local colour' he can introduce, the more truly will he be educating the children, and the more he will delight them, for there are few things a child enjoys more than flights of imagination. And if the teacher lacks the power of painting vivid word-pictures, there are always picture-books—which are, nowadays, almost all that could be desired."[3]

[1] *The Way into the Kingdom*, p. 47.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 55.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 47.

In this cycle the story is the core of instruction. Round it are grouped all the subjects of the programme. A child desires to talk, and to listen, to act, to draw, to paint and to model, to dance, to sing, and to construct things. The story satisfies all these instincts. It extends the child's vocabulary, for the story should be a model of good expression; it forms the beginning of literary taste; it gives the first ideas of history; it is the mental and spiritual nourishment. It is the mine from which the child draws all the material for sketching, modelling, acting, speaking, music—in fact, all the material for a child's expression is derived from the story content.

Children love stories. Through them we reach the heart of the child. The child thinks of the people he has heard of in stories. Jack the Giant-Killer and Alice in Wonderland were very real persons to us all in childhood. Our duty now is to fill the imagination of our babies with stories of Jesus, so that they will busy their minds about Him. They will look on Him as a friend who is living with them, as One who deeply loves them. Very soon they will deeply love Him, because it is the nature of a child to give love for love.

Story-telling is the natural vehicle of instruction for children. To teach by story and fable is the oldest of the arts. That art has been consecrated by Christ, who spoke to the people in parables. He could have selected other means of instructing the people, but in teaching through stories He left us an example which we must follow.

"The Teller of Tales."

R. L. Stevenson, whom the natives of the South Seas named "Tusitala," "The Teller of Tales," records his impressions of a school at Hatiheu. "My purpose in this visit led me first to the boys' school, for Hatiheu is the University of the North Islands. The hum of the lesson came out to meet us. Close by the door, where the draught blew coolest, sat the lay brother; around him, in a packed half-circle, some sixty high-coloured faces set with staring

eyes; and in the background of the barn-like room benches were to be seen, and blackboards with sums on them in chalk. The brother rose to greet us, sensibly humble. Thirty years he had been there, he said, and fingered his white locks as a bashful child pulls out his pinafore. 'Et point de résultats, Monsieur, presque pas de résultats,' as he pointed to the scholars." Stevenson seeks the cause of the failure to get results, and he finds that the curriculum consists in "prayers and reading and writing, prayers again and arithmetic, and more prayers to conclude: such appeared to be the dreary nature of the course. I asked the brother if he did not tell them stories, and he stared at me; if he did not teach them history, and he said, 'Oh yes, they had a little Scripture history from the New Testament,' and repeated his lamentations over the lack of results. I had not the heart to put more questions: I could but say it must be very discouraging, and resist the impulse to add that it seemed also very natural."[1]

Action and Detail.

The young child wants a story with plenty of action in it. They dislike description. They have little interest in hearing how people looked or what they felt. They are very interested in actions, what took place, what people did and said. They have no patience with the shades and nuances of emotion. The average child deliberately skips the long descriptive passages in stories, and passes on to the conversational parts of the book. Yet they like details. Vagueness here displeases them, as one may judge by the nature of their questions. It is remarkable how trivial details will stick in a child's mind, sometimes when the main point is unnoticed.

Story-Telling a Necessary Art.

The first qualification of a teacher in this stage is the art of telling stories. It is essential for success. As an infant

[1] *In the South Seas*, R. L. Stevenson, chapter on Hatiheu.

we hear stories at our mother's knee, at school we begin with stories, throughout our schooldays stories play a great part in our education, after school we listen to a Gospel story each Sunday. If the teacher in the secular school must be a story-teller, how much more is expected from the teacher of religion? In secular work the teacher has to search for matter, but in religion it is already there. His duty is to clothe it in language that is simple, vivid, appealing, real. The teacher of religion must be an artist in words, painting pictures that will remain. He is to make stories live by introducing form and life, splash and colour. He is to have faith in the story; since it is worth hearing, therefore it is worth telling well. Like a true artist, the story-teller enjoys the telling. "The teacher tells the story so as to make the actors stand out as living beings, and enables the children to see with their eyes and hear with their ears all that is said and done. . . . Children are often set to learn Bible History in the first instance from a book. It is essential that the first impression should be a good one. If the story is well told, the child's interest is awakened, and it is all ears to know something further."[1]

The teacher of religion must not hurry through the stories. He will build up the pictures vividly, that they may linger in the children's minds exactly as the fairy-tales do, but with a different atmosphere clinging round them. To do this means, of course, trouble, for it means skill. Skill in narration, skill in description, skill in illustration. These things are our business as teachers in all departments—why not, then, supremely in this? Yet how often are the children simply set to learn the miracles or parables out of some summary with no word of explanation or description? Think of the parable of the Prodigal Son thus learnt, and then think of it in the mouth of a teacher concerned with making our Lord live to his class, how He feels and behaves to His returning children. What a difference! A contrast of Life and Death!

[1] *A Practical Commentary on Holy Scripture*, F. J. Knecht, (B. Herder, U.S.A.), Introduction.

How to Acquire the Art. Story-telling is an art. You may be naturally gifted, then use the five talents. If you have not the art by nature, then your chief duty as an elementary teacher is to cultivate it. Power in an art is acquired only by practice. Get to know the stories you like telling best—these will in general be the stories the children most enjoy hearing. Question yourself as to why the children like them, and introduce a similar method in the others.

" The sense of self grows by the sense of pattern." The good story-teller studies the best models, especially the Gospel narrative that lives for us, if we were only to open wide the windows of our soul and see it. Christ is our Model as teachers of religion. He adapted His words to His listeners. He chose the simple, familiar things around Him to illustrate divine truths—*e.g.*, the murmuring of the wind, the ripening corn, the sparrow hopping on His path.

The Gospel gives us the outline, and we should fill in the details. If we wish the child to exercise his imagination, we must lead the way by touching the facts of the Gospel with the living colours of imagination. The teacher is at liberty to paint a genuine, pious, reverent picture of the boy Jesus at home in Nazareth. He is free to bring the story down to the everyday life of the child. It is no longer a relevant application to stress the fact of the boy Jesus going to the village well for water for the home. That can be translated into a modern errand.

In this stage it is expedient to translate the Scriptural phrases into a language more suitable to a child. Put yourself in the place of the child, look at things from his point of view, use the kind of talk likely to appeal to him —not necessarily childish, ungrammatical talk, but simple, natural talk. Listen to a mother telling stories to her children and note how she adapts her language to the capacity of the child. What comes to the mother naturally must be cultivated by the teacher.

For example, telling the story of the Prodigal Son to little ones, the teacher could begin thus: " Once there was a father

who had two sons. All their lives they had lived with him, helping him with the work of the farm, until one day the younger son, who had grown tired of doing the same old thing day after day, went to his father and said: 'Father, I want to go away from here. I know that one day I shall have a share in your money; let me have my share now so that I may go to town and enjoy myself.' The father felt very sad when he heard this. . . ." With older children the beautiful, heart-stirring words of the parable, straight from the Gospel narrative, will be used. This parable is the perfect short story, a gem of literary art, worth careful study by the teacher of religion.

Class Dramatisation.

We have used class dramatisations as a constant exercise in this stage. Dramatisation is a wonderful ally to story-telling. The children are keenly interested. They love to act, and, what is often overlooked by adults, they live the parts. The class dramatisation provides a suitable occasion for much casual instruction and incidental teaching, which sticks in the mind, because it is connected with something they are doing. The mysteries of the Rosary are given a new meaning through class pageants of the scenes. The joyful mysteries are an unfailing source of suggestion for class dramatisation. Our teachers do most of the preparation for First Holy Communion through the class drama, weaving the doctrine into the dialogue.

Second Cycle: To Make and Use a Model of Palestine.

During the four years (eight to twelve) we have worked out the following project. The aim is to follow Christ around the Liturgical Year. Each grade made a large relief model of Palestine in plasticene. The class was divided into three groups, and to each was assigned one of the three sections of Palestine—Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. The group studied its own division, with atlas and the relief map in Schuster's Bible History. The contour

and formation of the country was seen. Much of this was done in the geography period. It proves a very useful lesson in map-making. Distances, heights, and locations were made according to scale. The towns were marked by coloured paper. Each division was then painted in different colours. A large pin, carrying a halo of gold paper on its head, represented Christ. The Apostles were designated by red-headed pins. Mary had a deep blue. The people did not have pins, but were indicated by little bits of paper laid on the model. We did this to avoid too many pin-holes.

We followed the Sunday Gospel. To discover the place where Christ was at the time, frequently sent the class to look through the Scriptures. Each grade added more details to the work. During the first year, our model was big and unfinished. We indicated the position of Christ, learned the name of the place and little more. Each year we advanced more. The model was more detailed. We located the place where Christ was, its characteristics, the kind of people who lived there, what their mode of living was. The nature of the discourse on the occasion was examined, and an attempt made to show the class how appropriate and applicable the words of Christ were to those people. The home-made Catechisms are filled with pictures and sketches, as we have described. Much of the inspiration of the sketch, and the personal comment, came from our use of this relief model of Palestine.

Bible History is the handmaid of the Catechism. We learn the doctrine by seeing it in life. The Bible stories present living examples and explanations of the Catechism. What we received in skeleton form is now seen clothed in flesh and blood, pulsing with life and vigour, in the story of God's dealings with man. By turning the events of sacred history as flashlights on the truths expressed in the Catechism, the dry bones will live and move among us in the flesh. Doctrine thus translated into action, emphasised by deed, comes within the child's mental grasp, and gives rise to emotions of love and desire of good, of hatred for evil, in hearts that may otherwise remain passive. The model was

found very helpful in illustrating the events of the New Testament. Bible History is a reference book for the Catechism. Whenever we find a quotation from Scripture in its pages, the class is sent to make the texts live by noticing context and circumstances. It is important that these texts should not be hastily cited as mere "texts." By seeing its context, and placing the location on our model map, we succeeded in making the occasion live in the children's mind. The text, seen with such a rich background, is theirs for life. One Scripture reference used in this way is worth a dozen mere citations.

USE OF A MODEL.

The topography and boundaries of the city of Jerusalem will be best done through a model which the children can make. We have seen splendid models made by children, accurate in detail, in which the children followed the last scenes of our Lord's life. Beginning at Mount Sion they traced, step by step, the events of Holy Thursday night. Fouard[1] supplies graphic and minute details. The fatigue, the shame, the special suffering of each step of the Passion, are brought home to the child with overwhelming force, when thus followed. Marking each step with a little cross, the children walk on the blood-stained footprints, going from Pilate's Court, describing each station as they go, until they come to the awful culmination. We have seen tears in the eyes of children as "scenes divine" were thus re-enacted. To follow the course of our Lord's life on map and model is to give a picture to the child that time will never efface. Search questions that send the children climbing over the hills of Judea looking for "the holy mountains," marching along the highways to see the "cities our Lord visited," climbing a hill to catch a glimpse of "a scene on the Jordan," sailing on the Sea of Galilee to find where "the miraculous draught of fishes" occurred, or strolling on the shore seeking the spot where "Peter received the Primacy," will make the Gospel narrative true and real to the child.

[1] *The Life of Christ.*

In this way the child will study Bible History which will make our Lord living for him, a sharer in his joys and sorrows. He is led to sit at His feet; to hear the Sermon on the Mount addressed to him; to wander with Him, a lonely, hunted man, in the year of persecution; to feel as if he were truly present on Calvary, were seen there by the divine eyes, spoken to by the divine lips, and loved personally by Him with whom there is no past or future. Thus, even though he may not be able to express the fact or comprehend it, he will come to feel with the Apostle: "He loved *me* and delivered Himself for *me*."

Another fruitful exercise is to send the children to the Scriptures, to read in the actual words of the Gospel what they learned as stories in the Bible Histories. What Lamb's Tales are to Shakespeare, so is Bible History to Sacred Scripture. Children need an appetising introduction, and that is provided in the story form of the Gospel.

"Is it a true story?" is the question of every child. We want to convince them that the Scripture stories are true, that they are stories about real warriors who fought fierce battles and conquered, of real heroes who did generous deeds, of real kings who were feared by their enemies and served by their friends. We want them to realise that Abraham, Moses, Joseph, Esther, Judith, the mother of the Machabees lived, and that they were heroes and heroines of God. We hope to make the pages of the New Testament live for them. Through story, picture, and map we show them how the children of those times worked and played and laughed and sang just like the children of our own day. The fundamentals of human nature have not changed. To-day in the streets of Jerusalem the children play the same games as when Christ walked along and observed: "We piped to you and you would not dance."

The Use of Maps.

How are we to do this? We do so by looking upon the Bible stories as history, and treating them as we would teach history. The use of maps is essential.

The obstacle to the perfect use of Bible History, as the servant of doctrine, lies in the fact that it is mapless in the usual manner of teaching it. For example, the journey of Moses is meaningless unless we trace in a map the former journey of Joseph being led into Egypt as a slave; without a map we cannot make clear the providence of God in allowing His chosen people, the Jews, to be taken into captivity. On a map we can follow the words of the Prophets carrying comfort, courage, and confidence to the exiled Jews. By its aid we can read the divine plan which scattered the Jews among the Gentiles, so that the " hope in Him who was to come " might be scattered as seed. By following the footsteps of St Paul through Asia Minor we can realise that the Prophets were the forerunners of the Apostles, that the Old Testament prepared the way for the New. In fact without a map the Acts of the Apostles is a puzzle. There are other uses for the map. We remember our early impressions of the Jews. We thought that their history was self-contained, neither influencing any other nor being influenced by another. The map will show the child that the Jews were not an isolated race. They had trade relations and social relations with all the nations around the Mediterranean Sea. As a people they did not stand aloof. They were destined to play a decisive part in the history of the world.

In the New Testament the map will make our Lord real to the children. They can accompany Him on their maps, watching the direction of His journeys, measuring their length, estimating the time He took to cover them—correlating with geography and mathematics.

Sketch-Maps.

To teach this subject effectively we might have a threefold division—Bible History, Bible Geography, and Bible Study—so that we may remember what is due from us as teachers of history, as teachers of geography, and as inspirers of love for the Scriptures. As teachers of Bible History and of Bible Geography we are not content to use wall-maps

only, but we set the pupils to make their own sketches. We need not look for exact detail; the best of maps is but approximately correct. The essentials to be aimed at are a sense of proportion, generally correct form and location, and that quickness in execution which is the result of practice. In geography we make a sketch-map of the Old Testament world. *Waters:* Mediterranean Sea, Red Sea, Caspian Sea, Dead Sea. *Rivers:* Nile, Jordan, Euphrates, and Tigris. *Countries* that influenced Palestine are to be studied in a general way—Egypt, Sinaitic Peninsula, Asia Minor, and the Roman Empire. A special study of the Sea of Galilee will repay us.

To Observe the Scene in Pictures.

Beside the map we place our modern artistic pictures. Ruskin says that "we may live as long without pictures, but it does not necessarily follow that we can live as well." Neither can we realise how people did live unless we visualise, through pictures, their mode of life. Children look at pictures. We must set them something to look for, and then they will *observe* them. Place some of Copping's "pictures that teach" before the class, and ask each child to write down his impressions of the picture of a story well known to him. Thus the observation of the picture is completed by the expression of the child's own thinking. Talk about the picture, visualise the time and place, help them to feel the atmosphere, to see the local colour, to observe the dress—all this is artistically reproduced now. Our teaching will then be picturesque. In that way we appeal to the imagination, put no strain on the memory, and awaken that sympathy and interest, which must be the possession of every student of history, religious or secular.

We can also appeal to the children of this stage to memorise parts of Sacred Scripture, texts that appeal to them, especially the parables. It has been our experience that children easily memorise the words of the parables. If we send the children to read the setting in Fouard, Mass, or Knecht, and then go to the relief model, the parable will

make a deep impression. If we trace the road that twists and turns between lonely hills from Jericho to Jerusalem, the story of the Good Samaritan will mean more to them. From their lessons in other subjects it will be easy to infer that such a highway between two important cities would be used frequently by people in a hurry. A glance at the relief model will open up new ideas. The caves, the rocks, and natural hiding-places afford tempting shelter for robbers. The path is narrow, the place is lonely, succour depends on an accidental wayfarer. The stage is set for an assassin, and all that is needed is that a victim should enter the net. That was common knowledge to the inhabitants, and thus a suitable mental background was waiting to receive and assimilate the new ideas. By the use of reference books, and attention to the plasticene model, we can lead the child to appreciate the appropriateness of Christ's teaching, speaking of fishermen in Galilee, and of shepherds in Judea. The Sunday Gospels will live for them when seen in the living picture.

All matters, all is interesting as adding relief and colour to the Person of Christ. Our chief work is to teach Him, and so to teach Him that He may fascinate these young hearts and hold them fast by love for ever. "Eye-sight" gives quicker, surer, more permanent impressions than "ear-gate," and "one thing done is better than many heard of." Above all, let us teach the life of our Lord objectively, and not be content with the "word method" of reciting chapter and verse.

Verse and chapter have been falling on our ears since childhood, but they do not recall anything significant. The "word method" has produced a crop of hazy allusions to far-away and faintly pictured events. Objective teaching will change that, and put our children in possession of a spiritual treasure. "Had we an accurate idea of the general sequence of the life of Christ and a little knowledge of Judea and Galilee, so that at will we could reproduce the Gospel story in a rich and suggestive setting, the words and things encountered from hour to hour would then recall sacredest

memories; white-walled town and blue lake water, grassy plain and stony wilderness and roadside well, palm and fig tree and thorn bush and field of corn would bring holy thoughts to mind. Imagination would leap up at the very mention of Thabor or Genesareth, Capharnaum, Bethsaida, or the Mountain of Temptation. When dull at times of prayer, we could retrace the steps of Christ's pilgrimage, going over again in spirit whatever has been recorded concerning Him."[1]

THIRD CYCLE: A SCRIPTURE-READING PROJECT.

From twelve years and upwards, our aim is to lead the child to the Sacred Scriptures, and let him learn to love them by using them. The result we seek is not so much that he should know *about* the Scriptures, but that he should know them, and through using them, learn to love and appreciate them. If we give the children the pure words of the Gospel, we may rest assured that the grace of God will do the rest.

Let us face the situation. The reading of the Bible is not part of the daily life of our Catholic people. By this neglect they miss a great influence in their lives. Our only hope to remedy that defect is to introduce the habit through these later school years. That is our project. In an interesting article on "The Neglected Bible," the author supports the challenge of his title by a suggested experiment: "It is very easy to put the matter to the test. I suggest that the reader puts the following questions to the top standards. Probably the results will cause astonishment. A remarkable ignorance about the origin, nature, contents, and value of the Bible will be disclosed.

"1. What is the meaning of the word 'Bible'?

"2. What kinds of books does the Bible consist of?

"3. Name some of the writers of (*a*) the Old Testament, (*b*) the New Testament.

"4. What is the Acts of the Apostles about?

[1] *Soul-Blindness*, Father McSorley, p. 17.

"5. What are the Epistles? Name the writers.
"6. What is the Apocalypse?"[1]

The experiment is worth a trial. The Bible is not the sole rule of faith. The Catholic Church points out the impossibility of Luther's contention. We look upon the Church as the infallible living voice telling us what to believe, and how to read the Bible. We believe, not because it is in the Bible, but because the Church teaches. The Bible is used to support the teaching. "It was never meant to be a *source* of faith, but rather a *support* of faith."[2] Our schools have busied themselves with the teaching of doctrine. Consequently, Scripture takes a subordinate place. Whenever Scripture forms part of the school curriculum, we have looked upon it as a text-book, an author that has to be done, a prescribed book for examination. The natural result of this treatment is that children look upon the Bible as they look upon their other text-books—they have no desire to see it again.

The Teacher's Preparation.

Our project begins with the teacher. Children are interested in persons; they are vitally so in their teacher. If we wish them to catch the spirit of the Gospel narrative, the teacher must lead the way by catching it himself. Three steps lead to that desired end.

1. By prayer, reading, and meditation the Christ of the Gospels becomes familiar and loved. Everything in the Gospel story has a definite value—no incident too trivial, no spoken word too insignificant to be absorbed in the search for knowledge of Him. "Hence a Catholic teacher should be a regular student of the four Gospels, pondering them in meditation, committing striking passages and incidents to memory, and, above all, praying the Holy Spirit to illumine his mind to understand aright the lessons therein contained. If this is done properly, we shall find

[1] "The Neglected Bible," A. E. Whittington, *The Sower*, February, 1921, pp. 136-138.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 137.

that the life of Christ will gradually become part of ourselves, so to speak; and we shall be able to tell the children about our Lord almost as if we had been witnesses and hearers of the truth, and not merely readers two thousand years after the event. What a difference that will make to the children! How much more easily we shall inspire their interest! What better food we shall be able to give their minds to digest, and divine grace to work upon! Indeed, not only will the children be interested, but we shall be more interested, happier, and better ourselves."[1]

2. The use of commentaries and some good Life of Christ, to give the background, and fill in the historical setting, is essential. Little by little the scene will begin to live for him, and he will be able to make it live for his pupils.

3. "Example is the school of mankind, and man will learn at no other" is Burke's admonition. If the teacher strives to walk in the footprints of Christ, the children will follow joyfully. To translate precept into practice is the first duty of him who would teach others.

The Bible as a Reference Book.

We recollect a teacher of English literature who insisted that no one was ready to read the Preface until he had finished the book. Our method is to place a copy of the Gospels in the child's hands, and then invent excuses for sending him thumbing his way through Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. When we have familiarised him with them, we can then begin with the "Preface," and outline the divisions, the authors, and the books of the Bible. It is our experience that the most suitable beginning we can make is to use the New Testament as a reference book for the Sunday's Mass. Set the class to find out the Epistle and Gospel, and to read through the whole chapter, so that they may see the context. Looking up the "Introit" and "Communion" will have the attraction of a hunt. We are

[1] "Our Glorious Apostleship," A. E. Whittington, *The Sower*, April, 1921, No. 23, p. 169. *Cf.* also the method of studying pictures outlined in *Teaching of Religion*, by Dr. P. C. Yorke, pp. 49-51.

delighted to find that the practice of approaching the reading of Scripture through the Liturgy, which has been common in our diocesan schools for some years, now receives the imprimatur of an authority on the point. " The Scriptural material is arranged in the Liturgy in a most effective, dramatical, poetical, symbolical, and pedagogical way, which renews year by year, throughout the cycle of the Liturgical seasons, the entire life of our Divine Lord and the whole economy of human redemption and sanctification, and weaves these into the lives of the Christian soul and of the Christian community. Moreover, this Scriptural material was explained in the homilies delivered in the Liturgical assemblies and in catechetical instructions, so that the writings of this kind which have come down to us from the Great Fathers, like St John Chrysostom or St Augustine, show us to-day how the Holy Scripture in ancient times was worked into the life of the faithful. It is an unfortunate fact that modern Catholics are not acquainted with the Sacred Scriptures. As a remedy for this condition, the simple method of placing Bibles indiscriminately in the hands of all for private reading is not so safe nor so effective as would be a thorough revival of the Liturgy. For in the Liturgy we learn the Scripture from the Church herself, in the last analysis the only competent teacher, and by a method which is more interesting and effective than any that a private individual can devise."[1]

The New Testament is used constantly as a reference, and ceases to be a text-book. The Scriptural references to the Sacraments are seen in their context. The child is led to visualise the scene where Christ claimed the power to forgive sins. The miraculous cure of the man sick of the palsy is done " that you may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins."[2] On the shores of the Sea of Galilee they stand with the Apostles and hear the power promised.[3] The solemn scene in the upper room,

[1] " The Liturgy and the Teaching of Religion," Arthur Durand, *Orate Fratres*, April, 1927, vol. i, No. 6, p. 175.

[2] Matt. ix 2-8. [3] Matt. xviii 18.

when Christ confers the claimed and promised power, can be made to live for them.[1] So with the Blessed Eucharist. They read through John vi and learn that Christ foreshadows the institution. The Synoptics give the accounts of the fulfilment, and it will be an interesting exercise to compare them.

A Prayer Project.

Many other projects will suggest themselves, and in their working-out the pupils will go back and forth through the pages of the Scriptures. For example, we can set them a project on: "How should we pray?"

(1) The children might be set to find prayers in which they adore God; in which they thank Him; in which they ask pardon; in which they ask for what they want.

(2) They look up the passages in the Gospel, giving our Lord's teaching on prayer. These they tabulate and classify.

(3) They look up the passages relating (*a*) how and (*b*) when our Lord prayed.

(4) This could be followed by a discussion on the times we should pray and how we should pray. This will do more for the child than many exhortations to frequent prayer. By watching our Lord praying on the hillsides or in the garden, they will learn not merely how to pray, but that prayer is union with God. That union expects us to put ourselves in His Presence, to come apart from the world and rest awhile, and then our prayer will be a conversation in which we shall be interested and attentive.

Natural Allies.

(1) *An Intellectual Hobby.*—To reach our goal we may also harness the natural appeal of the Sacred Scriptures to the supernatural motives in view. The study of the Bible can be a fascinating intellectual hobby. We can introduce the children of this stage to it. For example, we are interested in some incident in the New Testament. Go to the Gospels

[1] John xx 23.

and read the account as given by the Synoptics. Write down the accounts in three parallel columns under their respective authors' names. Study them, and the result will be a composite picture, one writer supplementing the other, the same truth in all, but presented by each evangelist coloured by his own individual personality. Some trait, adjective, turn of phrase, circumstance or omission, portrays the man within the inspired author. A final exercise will be to see in a diatessaron the different accounts woven into one continuous narrative.

Another exercise that will help to initiate pupils into the study of Scripture as a hobby, is to take a phrase from the Bible and ask them to explain its meaning. For example, we may give them one of the poetic descriptions from the Psalms—*e.g.*, "The ways of Sion mourn." The child must picture the roads leading to Jerusalem thronged with worshippers, and again visualise those same ways after the people had been taken into captivity. How beautiful and how touching is the description of the inspired Prophet, as he sat upon the broken walls of the ruined city! In the working out of this project much history is correlated.

"Far from being dry and uninteresting, the study of Sacred Scripture is most pleasant and even fascinating to those who have been properly introduced to it. There is a unique sense of pleasure in the knowledge that one is pondering God's own work, so to speak, manifested to us by His chosen human instruments. Every fact noted, each harmony discovered, every word committed to memory is an asset of purest gold, a ray of light absorbed from the brilliance of God's mind, a spark of divine fire to kindle flames in our own heart in a world that is all too cold. Some of the happiest moments of my studies as a boy were when I was engrossed on the commentary of the sacred text, learning the solutions of difficult passages, or meeting the objections of modern critics."[1]

(2) *The Bible as Literature.*—There is another natural ally that we can place under tribute to the end in view. We can

[1] *The Neglected Bible*, p. 137.

point out the literary excellence of the Bible. On merely natural grounds the Bible is the greatest book the world possesses. We can introduce the Bible as a collection of literature during the literature period. To get children to appreciate the literary excellence of the Bible is a big step to our goal, and one that rewards cultivation. We have set the class to write an account of some Gospel incident, such as a parable, using picture and commentary. When finished place it beside the evangelist's picture, and note the economy of words, the delicate use of descriptive phrases. The result of a detailed comparison will be to raise the Bible in the estimation of the child.

The carrying out of these projects, and the many others that will present themselves to teachers and taught, will help as means to the end. The child leaving school will have a copy of the New Testament. We hope through our inspiration that he will have the habit of reading it. Were the pupils of this cycle to read a chapter a day, our work will not have been in vain.

The natural appeals to use the Bible as an intellectual hobby, or as the fount of pure literature are useful allies, but they must not tend to displace the end in view. Again and again it will be necessary to emphasise the supernatural character of the Bible. It is not merely a history of God's dealings with men. It is the Word of God, having God Himself for its Author. In this respect it is unique; it is infinitely above the very best literature the world can provide.

Memorised Texts are Scripture Treasures.

Because God is its Author, the very words have a grace, and the text a tremendous power. Each time one reads the sacred text, a new meaning, a new inspiration, a new benefit comes from contact with it. Our experience tells us that the quoted phrase in sermon or instruction has gone home, has set us meditating, has fixed itself in our memories when all else is forgotten. In their reading of the Scriptures, we can encourage the children to memorise phrases that

strike them. In that memorised text, the children have in a few words the essence of the lesson. In this way useful associations will be formed in the pupil's mind: the child will become alert, expectant, apperceptive, pulling himself up at the proper stimulus, and the apt quotation will become focal.

For example, the following texts are full of meaning:

"What doth it profit a man to gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?"

"What exchange shall a man give for his soul?"

"Seek first the Kingdom of God, and all else shall be added unto you."

"The sufferings of this time are not to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us."

"My delight is to be with the children of men."

A collection of these texts, bearing on the varied situations in life, would be of great value. These would strengthen in times of temptation, console in sorrow, and support in difficulties. They would be spiritual pastilles which the child would chew mentally, and in the chewing the juices of inspiration would nourish his soul. They would be Scriptural *bons-mots* that lie waiting and watching for something that may bring them into consciousness.[1]

"Reading the Scriptures to meditate" is not an impossible ideal to put before our children. Children do meditate; they may not recognise it by that name, but meditation it is. The Basilian Fathers have selected an appropriate title for the collection of texts to be memorised: *Scripture Treasures*. Treasures do not lie on the surface waiting for someone to happen along. Like those of the Spanish Main, they lie deep down, and he who would have them must dig deep. The more the child is encouraged to read and to think, the

[1] A collection of short passages from Holy Scripture, selected for memorisation in schools, has been published since April, 1926: *Scripture Treasures*, by the Basilian Fathers (William H. Sadler, 37, Barclay St., New York). The *Treasures* are tabulated under headings covering life situations, and an index indicates individual texts.

more the gold glitters, the gems sparkle, and the treasures dazzle in the pages of the sacred text. And that treasure-trove lies awaiting the children of our schools, if we only add the spark that will inflame the spirit of adventure so deep-rooted in youth. "It is not necessary to have reached manhood to appreciate the beauty of Holy Writ. I am convinced that any youth properly disposed, and with a correct grounding, can read and enjoy a considerable portion of the Old Testament, and be filled with delight over the personality and teaching of Christ as depicted in the New Testament."[1]

Plato, in his ideal state, built on the foundation-stone of education, which he fashions in *The Republic*, insists that youth must grow up amidst impressions of grace and beauty. "Our youth will dwell in a land of health, and amid fair sights and sounds, and receive the good in everything." Plato adds his reason: "Human nature is coined into very small pieces. . . . Imitations beginning in early youth and continuing far into life, at length grow into habits and become a second nature."

If what Plato writes is true in the natural plane, how much more essential is it for us religious teachers to see that our youth grow up in a land of spiritual health amid fair sights and sounds? Let us lead our youth into the garden of Sacred Scripture, indicate to them the wealth of flowers that are there, and then leave them to roam at will along its rose-strewn paths leading always to Him.

But is this possible? Yes, provided we make the reading of Scripture "its own end," in the Newmanic sense "of expecting no complement, and refusing to be absorbed by any other end." We wish to inspire and develop a love of the sacred text for its own sake, rather than to satisfy an examiner. Then the child will see in the pages before him, a sublime message from the Holy Spirit to love the Person whom the chapters unfold, to respond to His call, and to apply to his soul the truth that "whatever was written was written for our knowledge."[2]

[1] *The Neglected Bible*, p. 138.
[2] Rom. xv 4.

3. The Mass—The Great Project.

The Mass is the centre from which our spiritual lives radiate. It is the measure and kindler of loyalty to God. And loyalty is the deepest thing in life. "It is the deepest and the lasting element in love; greater love no man hath." "It is the Mass that matters."

The Mass is an Action.

The essential thing for us to remember in school is that the Mass is an action. We may spend time in worrying our pupils about the different theories explaining the sacrificial nature of the Mass. Our excursions into the history of sacrifice may be interesting. But our time will be better spent in making the children understand and enter into the action of the Mass, because that will be a recurring experience in their lives. What is said *about* the Mass should not occupy school time. The Mass is an action to be performed, an experience to be lived. The best way to learn about the Mass is to go to Mass.

Instructions "Infra Actionem."

In the *Australasian Catholic Record* of October, 1925, Archbishop Sheehan reminds pastors of their duty to teach the Mass. His words are applicable to teachers of Christian doctrine. He quotes the Council of Trent:

"Although the Mass contains great instruction for the faithful, its celebration in the vernacular is deemed inexpedient by the Fathers of the Council. Hence . . . lest the flock of Christ should hunger, and the little ones ask for bread and there be no one to break it to them, the Holy Council commands pastors, and *all having the care of souls*, that, during the celebration of Masses, they either personally or through others, should frequently explain some of those things that are being read (in the Missal), and among other matters should enfold some mystery associated with the Mass, particularly on Sundays and holidays."

The Archbishop comments on this decree as follows:

" The mind of the Council, therefore, is that the people should have explained to them what is being done during the Mass. This, as is evident, will not be secured by an instruction given altogether apart from the Holy Sacrifice; *it can be done effectually only by placing the explanation as close as possible to the particular section of the Mass to which it refers.* . . . At the time of the Council of Trent prayer-books were not as numerous as they are now, but still, I have no doubt whatever that even the best prayer-book needs to be supplemented by the word of the priest. . . . Just before the Offertory, tell the people that in the Mass we have the special aid of Christ. This should be put forward with all emphasis; it is vital; without it your instruction will be of small service. . . . You need not—and indeed should not—say one word about the Sacrificial Period; the prayers of the Liturgy, briefly explained, will speak for themselves. . . . Even at the risk of being tedious, let me repeat what I have so often said, and what is so prominent in the Liturgy, that the Mass is *our* sacrifice, offered by us living men through the power given us by Christ. This thought should be the very warp and woof of your instruction."

We can follow that interpretation of the decree of Trent in our schools, and, through object lessons on the Mass, " place the explanation as close as possible to the particular section of the Mass to which it refers."

Devotion is the Aim.

Our aim is to increase the devotion to the Mass among our children. We offer the explanations of the action of the Mass, in order that the intellect, by perceiving the excellence of the Mass, may point the way to the end in view. " Truth is taught through the senses, not, of course, that it may remain there, but because man's nature is partly material and partly spiritual, and the senses are ordinary channels of spiritual forces. Thus in the Incarnation the Word was made flesh, so that, as the Preface of Christmas Day says:

'While we acknowledge Him as God, seen by men, we may be drawn by Him to the love of things unseen.'"[1]

Our method is to make the Mass an *experience* for our children. We shall have succeeded if our children look on each Mass attended as a real experience. Dewey, in *How we Think*, brings out very clearly the fact that experience is a combination of the active and the passive. "When we experience something, we act upon it, we do something with it. Then we suffer or undergo the consequences. We do something to a thing, and it does something to us in return." Naturally, a mere physical presence at Mass will not have much value as experience. There is a mighty difference between "hearing Mass" and "being present at Mass." The one is an experience, because we enter into it in an understanding way. We live through the action. It affects us. It is as vital in our lives as it was to the mediæval Catholics, who acted the Mass in union with the priest.

The Liturgical Method.

The Mass is an action, a purposeful activity. We can make it real to our children, by looking upon it as the core around which all Catholic education clusters, as the mountain peak dominating all we do as religious teachers, as the sun of our spiritual lives, diffusing light and warmth to our darkened vision and cold hearts. But how can we do this? By returning to the Liturgical method of the Church. That we have wandered far from that method of teaching which the Church has ever employed, is apparent if we compare what we are doing now in our schools with what the Church has done and is doing in her Liturgy. "By the abstract method, which predominates in our present Catechism, the child memorises and tries to understand theological formulas. For example, the Catechism says: 'By the Incarnation I mean that the Son of God was made man.' How much more effectively does the Liturgy teach the meaning of the

[1] "The Liturgy and the Teaching of Religion," Arthur Durand, *Orate Fratres*, April, 1927, vol. i, No. 6, p. 176.

Incarnation at Christmas time. The four weeks of Advent are given to preparation for the great event which is commemorated on Christmas Day itself in the three Masses of midnight, dawn, and full day. The dogma is made concrete and visible. It resounds in chants and hymns; it shines forth in the light of many candles; it is pictured in the crib; it overflows from the church into the home and family circle in the widespread customs of Christmas time."[1]

But we are slowly getting back to the *way* on which Christ, the great Catechist, trod, and on which the Church is following. We have listened to modern psychology and pedagogy telling us of a recent discovery of a " new " idea which is called the " project principle." We analyse this " new " idea and find that it is the traditional method of Liturgical education.

Let us go back to this old and better way. To reassure ourselves that by returning we are advancing, let us call the old way by a new name—" the project way." Here in the Mass we have the best possible opportunity for the application of the project principle. " The Liturgy is supernatural experience which, together with the natural experience of everyday living, should be the starting-point of religious education. It is not mere aspiration. It does not only ' show forth and explain the Divine.' Rather it ' develops and fulfils,' because it is a way of living. By participation in the Liturgy, we live with Christ, and, as a consequence, we learn to live like Him. In a word, the Liturgy is the ' Great Project ' which the Church has utilised from the beginning to train her children in the ways of sacred citizenship. It is the heavenly action by which supernatural ideas, attitudes, and habits are built up."[2]

The Mass Project.

We have worked the following project on the Mass in the schools of Western Australia since 1923. Instructions in

[1] " The Liturgy and the Teaching of Religion," Arthur Durand, *Orate Fratres*, April, 1927, vol. i, No. 6, p. 175.

[2] " The Liturgy as a Form of Educational Experience," George Johnson, *C.E.R.*, November, 1926, vol. xxiv, pp. 529-530

the Mass form a special feature of our programme in Christian doctrine. To supply suitable material for the projects, we published a text-book on the Mass which is used in grades and high school.[1]

In all our schools the religious period on Fridays is devoted to the Mass, and in a special way prepares the children for Sunday's Mass.

The project aims to cover the whole school life of the child from the infant class to the last year of high school. We arrange the Mass in three cycles, along the lines of the concentric plan of history teaching. The whole Mass is gone through in each cycle, but from a different point of view each time. In the *first cycle*, the elementary school (age five to eight), we fill the imagination through picture, story, and object lessons on the Mass. In the *second cycle*, the primary school (age eight to twelve), we enrich the story-content of the Mass, and open the avenues of experience through model altars and Mass dramas. In the *third cycle*, the secondary school (age twelve and upwards), we look on the Mass from the Liturgical view-point, appealing to our pupils to know the Mass by participating in it, and to love it by living it. A brief description of what we have done in each cycle may be more helpful than any further comment.

The Elementary School (*Age Five to Eight*). *The Picture Cycle.*

The project in this cycle is to make a class picture-book on the Mass. We got a large scrap-book. We divided the class into pairs, and began by giving each pair two pages. The children were sent to search for pictures, illustrations, symbols—anything that referred to the Mass. The pairs worked at different times at the pasting. A comparison was made between the various contributions, the class asked to pronounce on which they liked best and why. In this

[1] *The Sacrifice of the Mass*, John T. McMahon (Carroll, Ltd., Hay St., Perth, Western Australia, price 1s. 3d. per copy). The book is written for use in schools. It is a text-book containing explanations and exhortations for children of the elementary and high schools. First edition, 1922; second edition, 1923; third edition, 1927.

way a healthy rivalry arose. Each pair was expected to tell the story of the picture pasted into their leaves. Before any pictures are pasted in, we take the class to church and conduct an object lesson on the Altar. Explaining the Tabernacle as the home of Jesus, we allow the children to roam around the Sanctuary. The aim is to make the children reverently at home in church, and with all the things that are seen and done in church. During other visits we show them the furniture that surrounds the home of Jesus—the charts, Missal-stand, candlesticks, Altar cloths, vestments, and sacred vessels. We look upon the picture-book as a guide. Whenever a chalice or vestment appears on its pages, we take that opportunity of discussing what we saw in church.

On Fridays we prepare for Sunday's Mass. The aim of our instructions is to make the children curious by asking them to observe certain things on Sunday. We send them to Mass with a question in their minds—they are to look for something, and report on Monday upon what they saw. By a gradual progression we cover the externals of the Mass during a school year, and before the cycle is concluded they have an intelligent attention at Mass. We begin by asking them to watch for the central acts—one Sunday for the Elevation, another for the Offertory, another for the Communion. The other parts follow in turn. Going through the picture-book, we get them curious about the vestments, the sacred vessels, the candles—in fact, everything that their pictures portray.

The activities are not confined to pasting in pictures. If a pair decide to sketch anything on the Altar, they are free to do so. The sand-tray is used to model the chalice or anything which they wish to represent objectively.

Accompanying all this is the appeal of stories. Stories on the parts of the Mass are given in our text-book, *The Sacrifice of the Mass*, already noted—*e.g.*, the Gloria brings back the shepherds, the Creed introduces the martyrs, the Lavabo tells of the Passion, the Elevation recalls the Last Supper. The stories are told at opportune occasions—*e.g.*,

when the child is pasting in pictures, or modelling an altar, or handling a vestment, or visiting the church. The story and the thing are closely associated in the child's mind—the one will recall the other. We are giving the child food for thought that will make Sunday's Mass an experience. On Mondays we have a discussion on what was done and seen at Sunday's Mass. It has been our experience that children of this age can be made very curious about the Mass, and through their observations on successive Sundays they make considerable progress.

The stories of this stage centre around the Person of our Lord. We can easily lead them to realise that the Mass recalls the work of our Lord. In fact, during this period the Mass should be the centre towards which all we do in religious instruction is directed and there united.

"We encourage our children to go to Mass, but we hide it from them, either by never mentioning the subject, or shrouding it by a thick veil of verbiage, just as if the *disciplina arcani* still existed and applied particularly to our little Catholics. Such a negative process will not benefit them; if their interest is not aroused they cannot help playing during the Holy Sacrifice, or get accustomed to fall into a kind of listlessness as soon as the sublime act of worship commences."[1]

The Primary School (*Age Eight to Twelve*). *The Story Cycle.*

In this cycle we have two projects, the one growing out of the other. The co-operative one is to make and equip a model sanctuary. The individual one is to plan and produce a personal Mass-book on the same lines as the home-made Catechism. During the past three years we have examined some beautiful souvenir books on the Mass made by children of this stage. They will be cherished mementos of happy activity in the after-school years. The Mass-book was inspired by the home-made Catechism. We have already described that in detail, so we need not dwell on it again.

[1] "A New Problem in Catechetics," Lambert Nolle, *C.E.R.*, February, 1911, p. 131.

The Model Sanctuary in the Making.—Our co-operative project began by a diligent search through catalogues for illustrations of Altars, Altar furniture, and Sanctuary fittings. A class scrap-book was used to file the result. Several visits were made to the church, and object lessons were conducted on the Altar. We divided the class into committees and called for designs for our Altar. Several groups worked in plasticene models. The design is accepted. The boys are set to make the Altar and fixtures, the girls are to make the vestments, Altar linen, and Sanctuary decorations. The children learn much about the models while they are making them.

In our text-book we have several diagrams which the pupils have enlarged and made into charts. One diagram represents the Mass as a climbing up the hill of Calvary. At the summit is the Consecration, and then descending to the last Gospel. The child moves step by step up the hill, explaining as he goes. The pupils are encouraged to search for pictures of the various parts and paste them into their home-made Mass-books. The Mass-books, as the home-made Catechisms, are filled with appropriate personal comments, and are revelations of private devotion and meditation. The diagrams open up many exercises. A pupil is asked to name all the steps from the Introit to Offertory; to locate the Memento for the Living; to point out variable parts of the Mass.

Another exercise is to use the model for an object lesson on how to hear Mass. Chapter XI (pp. 90-96) in *The Sacrifice of the Mass* supplies sufficient matter for the lesson. We divide the Mass into four parts according to the four ends: Adoration, Thanksgiving, Reparation, and Petition. We stress the necessity of fulfilling these four duties to God during the Mass, and appeal to the pupils to make their own acts of adoration, etc., and record them in their books. We ask all to copy the following verse, which will be an easy way of remembering the four duties.

"Adore, till the Gospel;
Give thanks, till the bell;
Till Communion ask pardon;
Then all your wants tell."

In our text-book, *The Sacrifice of the Mass*, we emphasise the fact that the congregation are co-offerers with the priest. "Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice, which is also yours, may be acceptable to God" is the petition of the Church through the priest at the *Orate Fratres*. Unite with the priest, especially at the Offertory, with the prayer: "O my God, I put myself also on the paten. I wish to be offered with Jesus, by the hands of the priest. . . . I will never more grumble about anything. Whatever you do is right."

Results are Encouraging.—The pupils are learning all the other parts as well as being perfect in their own. Each pupil is expected to record the whole exercise in his Mass-book. He is encouraged to make it a personal summarising. The story-content is enriched by pictures, extracts, diagrams, and personal comments. This objective teaching of the Mass has borne fruit. Pastors and teachers agree that it has made the children very attentive about the Mass. We are convinced, after several years' experience as an examiner of Christian doctrine, that the objective teaching has done more to beget a proper appreciation of and a lasting devotion to the Mass than the numerous discourses given on the subject. The children love the method. "I have learned one thing that has helped me greatly. I know the parts of the Mass, and at school I began to use a Missal, and Mass has never seemed too long since."

We add a copy of the class drama on the Mass taken verbatim from a child's Mass-book:

Part I gives what is necessary for the celebration of Mass, the furniture of the Altar, the sacred vessels, and the vestments.

Part II pictures the Mass as a climbing up the hill of Calvary. Each step is a part of the action of the Mass. A large table is placed in the centre of the classroom. The children stand around the walls, each child coming forward with his article for the preparation of the Altar. He picks this up from a table on the left-hand side of the room, goes to the Altar, explains what he has in hand, arranges it correctly, and passes to the right to take his place after the last child.

So it goes on until Part I is finished, and each child has done something. Part II follows on with the steps of the Mass, a boy acting as priest, until the explanations of the various steps are finished. The children's parts are numbered 1, 2, 3, etc., in Part I, and 1st step, 2nd step, etc., in Part II.

The Method in Detail.

Part I.

1. *Sacrifice:* Is the highest and greatest act of worship that man can perform. God Himself in the Old Law commanded sacrifices to be offered to Him.

   These ancient sacrifices were figures, or shadows of the sacrifice of the New Law, the Holy Mass.

   Each ceremony connected with the Holy Mass, each vestment worn by the celebrant, and each piece of Altar furniture, has its symbolic or historical meaning.

The following articles are necessary for celebrating Mass:

2. *The Altar:* Is the place of sacrifice—as it were, another Calvary. It also represents the table used for the Last Supper.
3. *Altar Stone:* A small slab of marble on which the Host and Chalice rest during Mass. It is specially consecrated by the Bishop, and it is the Altar really, because you must always have a consecrated Altar Stone to say Mass on. If a priest has to say Mass in all sorts of different places, he must have a thin Altar Stone that he can carry about.
4. *Altar Cloths:* Three linen Altar Cloths are on the Altar. The two under ones reach only from end to end; the top one descends at both sides to the floor. These must cover the Altar Stone.
5. *Ablution Bowl:* It always stands near the Tabernacle. The priest washes his fingers in this bowl after touching the Sacred Host; therefore the water cannot be touched by anyone except a priest.
6. *The Crucifix,* or image of our Saviour on the Cross, is placed upon the Altar, that, as Mass is said, both the priest and the people may have before their eyes during this sacrifice the image which puts them in mind of those mysteries.

7. *Wax Candles:* For Mass it is necessary to have two lighted Wax Candles. The light is symbolic of Christ enlightening the world.
8. *Charts:* They contain portions of the Mass which cannot be conveniently read from the Missal. This one stands in front of the Tabernacle. This is the Gospel Chart; it stands on the left-hand side of the Altar. This one remains on the Epistle side of the Altar.
9. *Missal Stand:* Used to rest the Missal on.
10. *Missal:* Is a large Latin book with the Epistles and Gospels and other prayers read at Mass. The bookmark in it has many ribbons for the priest's convenience.
11. *Key:* I have the Key of the Tabernacle, our Lord's House on earth. The Tabernacle contains our Lord really present under the appearance of bread in the consecrated Hosts, kept in a gold or silver Ciborium, closed with a lid. The large Sacred Host exposed at Benediction is also kept there.
12. *Gong:* Is occasionally rung during Mass to give notice, to such as cannot see the Altar, of the more solemn parts of the Mass. It is rung three times at the Sanctus, the first principal part, the Canon of the Mass. It is rung once to give warning that the Consecration is about to take place. The bell is rung six times at the Consecration, the second principal part of the Mass, and three times at the Domine non sum dignus, to let the people know that the priest's Communion, the third principal part of the Mass, is at hand.
13. *Flowers:* To honour our Lord's Presence, fresh flowers are kept on the Altar, except during penitential seasons, Advent and Lent.

The priest vests in the following manner to offer the Holy Sacrifice:

14. *The Amice:* An oblong piece of white linen with two strings. The priest passes it first over his head, then on his shoulders, then ties it round his waist. There are certain prayers appointed to be said as the priest puts on each vestment after kissing it.
15. *Alb:* A white linen garment reaching to the feet. The white colour of the Alb and Amice signifies the purity required in those who come before God at the Altar.

16. *Cincture or Girdle :* A long cord passed round the waist and used for holding up the Alb.
17. *Maniple :* Is a silk vestment which the priest carries upon his left arm.
18. *The Stole :* Is the sign of the spiritual power of the priest. The priest must wear a Stole when saying Mass, hearing Confessions, etc.
19. *Chasuble :* The Church makes use of five colours for the vestments:

    White, worn on the feasts of our Lord, the Blessed Virgin, Angels, and Saints who were not Martyrs.

    Red on the feasts of Apostles and Martyrs.

    Black is the colour for Good Friday, and for Masses for the dead.

    Purple is used during penitential seasons, Advent and Lent.

    Green on those days in certain seasons on which no Saint's feast falls.
20. *Biretta :* The cap worn by the priest is known by the Italian word Biretta.

The following Altar vessels are used at Mass:

21. *Chalice :* Is the cup of gold or silver in which the priest consecrates, and from which he receives, the Precious Blood of our Lord.
22. *Purifier :* A linen cloth used to purify or wipe the Chalice and Paten after the ablutions.
23. *Paten :* Is a small gold or silver plate on which the consecrated Host rests during Mass.
24. *Chalice Veil :* Is a square piece of silk the colour of the Chasuble.
25. *Burse :* Resembles a purse. It is used to hold the Corporal. The Corporal is a square piece of linen upon which the Host is placed from the Offertory to the priest's Communion. Whenever the Blessed Sacrament is taken out of the Tabernacle, It is placed on the Corporal.
26. *Wine of the Grape :* The wine is poured into the Chalice, and when the words of consecration are pronounced by the priest, it is changed into our Lord's Precious Blood.
27. *Water :* The drop of water put into the wine in the Chalice by the priest, signifies the union of the divine and human natures in Jesus Christ.

28. *Jug and Basin :* The priest needs these at the Lavabo. Lavabo is the Latin word for washing. The priest washes his hands to teach us how pure we ought to be when we assist at Mass.

29. *Linen Towel :* The priest wipes his hands at the Lavabo and after the Communion.

30. *Communion Towel :* Linen cloth used for Holy Communion, being held under the chin of the communicant.

31. *Sanctuary Lamp :* To honour our Lord's Presence, a lamp is kept continually burning before the Tabernacle, while the Blessed Sacrament remains there.

The Mass.

Part II.

1*st Step : The Sign of the Cross.* We make the Sign of the Cross, In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen. That means in Their name, and for Their sake, you are going to do this good action of hearing Mass.

2*nd Step : The Confiteor* (I confess). The priest says it because he is just going to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and he must have a pure heart to do that. The server says it for you.

3*rd Step : By the Merits of the Saints whose Relics are here.* The priest walks up the steps to the Altar, and he bows down and kisses the Altar Stone. This stone stands for Christ our Lord, because He said He was the stone which the builders rejected.

4*th Step : The Introit.* Means "entering." It tells that we are entering on the act of sacrifice.

5*th Step : Kyrie Eleison.* Greek words; mean "Lord, have mercy on us." These words have been said in the Mass for nearly 1,500 years.

6*th Step : Gloria in Excelsis.* A joyful hymn; it means "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will." These joyful words were first used by the Angels outside Bethlehem, when they announced to the Shepherds that our Lord had just been born.

7*th Step : Dominus Vobiscum.* These words mean: "The Lord be with you." The priest uses these words seven times during the Mass.

8th Step : Collect and Lesson. "Collect" means "a prayer for everybody." The "Lesson" may be a bit of the Old Testament, or some words from St Paul or St Peter, or one of the other great Apostles who wrote, inspired by God.

9th Step : The Changing of the Missal. The server takes the book and stand, and removes them to the left-hand side of the Altar. This reminds us of the difference that our Lord's coming made.

10th Step : Gospel, which means "good tidings." The Gospel is some passage from the life and teaching of our Lord. The people stand during the Gospel out of respect for the divine words. The Gospel tells of the birth, life, and death of our Lord.

11th Step : The Creed. "Credo" is the Latin word which means "I believe." We should say: "Lord, I believe all that the priest is saying."

12th Step : The Offertory. The offering of the Bread and of the Wine. The first important part of the Mass is just beginning. The priest prays a special little prayer for all those present, for all faithful Christians, living and dead.

13th Step : Wine and Water. The priest pours wine and then water into the Chalice. The wine, so closely mixed with the water, shows our Lord's divine nature joined with His human nature. There were some heretics who did not believe our Lord had two natures.

14th Step : The Lavabo. Let the washing of the priest's hands fix in your minds how freely Christ offers Himself, how freely He pours out His Precious Blood.

15th Step : The Preface. Means "coming before." This long prayer is just a long "thank you," and it tells about the different things we must specially thank God for, at the different seasons of the Church.

16th Step : The Sanctus. "Holy, holy, holy," that portion of the prayer is taken from the book of the Prophet Isaias, in which he describes the Seraphim, wonderful Angels with six wings, crying "Holy, holy, holy" in Heaven.

17th Step : The Consecration and the Elevation of the Host. The priest takes the Host in his hands, as our Lord took the bread in His hands at the Last Supper, and says the very same words our Lord said that night: "This is my Body."

18*th Step : The Consecration of the Chalice.* The words the priest now says over the Chalice change the wine into our Lord's Precious Blood. It is the very blood that our Lord shed to win our pardon.

19*th Step : Genuflection.* The priest now prays softly, every now and then he genuflects. He did not do that in the first part of the Mass; it is to honour our Lord, who is present on the Altar. At different places in the Mass the priest has to touch the Sacred Host, and each time before he touches it he bends his knee, and again after he has touched it.

20*th Step : The Silence and Seven Words.* Just as Holy Mass is the same sacrifice as Calvary, this silence is the same that reigned while our Lord hung upon the Cross. That silence was broken seven times by the words of Christ.

21*st Step : Pater Noster* means "Our Father." The priest raises his voice at the Our Father, thus ending the great silence of the Canon of the Mass.

22*nd Step : Fractio Panis* means the breaking of the bread. The priest here breaks the Host in half. At the Last Supper our Lord broke bread and gave it to His disciples.

23*rd Step : Agnus Dei.* Latin words which mean "Lamb of God." St John the Baptist was the first to use these words, when he saw our Lord walk past. He pointed Him out, and said: "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world."

24*th Step : The Priest's Communion.* "Domine, non sum dignus" means "Lord, I am not worthy," etc. These words were said by the Centurion, whose servant was dying.

25*th Step : People's Communion.* The priest gives the Absolution, and you make the Sign of the Cross very reverently. The priest then takes up one of the Hosts and holds it up high, saying: "Behold the Lamb of God."

26*th Step : Corpus Domini Nostri.* At last the wonderful moment comes when the priest stands in front of you, and holds up the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ and says: "May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ keep thy soul unto life everlasting, Amen."

27th Step : The Blessing. The priest kisses the Altar and joins his hands, and says: " May God Almighty bless you." Then, turning round, he makes a big sign of the Cross over the people, saying: " Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

28th Step: The Last Gospel. You again make the three little Signs of the Cross on your forehead, lips, and chest. The priest is reading the first chapter of St John's Gospel, and it tells that our Lord is always, from the beginning, the Son of God.

There is never a moment of the day or night in which the Holy Sacrifice is not being actually offered up in one or other portion of the world. At every moment thousands of Masses are being offered up to God. Scarcely do the golden rays of the rising sun light up the distant horizon of any land than priests in thousands rise to offer up their daily Mass.

Each morning, offer all the Masses that will be said that day throughout the world. At night, before you retire to rest, offer up to God the Masses that will be celebrated during all the time that you are wrapped in sleep. Thus may you join in the perpetual sacrifice of priceless value that is ever going up before the Throne of God above.

The Holy Sacrifice is being offered—

1. From early morning till midday of our time, in Japan, China, New Zealand, Australia.
2. From eight o'clock till evening, throughout South Africa.
3. From 4 p.m. till midnight, throughout Europe.
4. From ten o'clock p.m. till sunrise, throughout North and South America.

Hymn : " I am a little Catholic."

Finish.

" Devotion and reverence are far more likely to be found in a child well instructed in the externals of the Mass than in one who is left in ignorance."[1]

[1] Mary Cahill in *The Sower.*

The Sower of July, 1926, refers to the "Eucharistic Method" of religious instruction followed by the Abbé Edouard Poppe in the Diocese of Ghent. "It is described in a pamphlet, *La Méthode Eucharistique*, published from the Abbey of Averbode in 1924, with a Preface by Cardinal Mercier. Its general principle is to make the Blessed Sacrament, and more especially the Mass, the centre of the child's whole life and all his religious knowledge. The study of the Catechism is arranged round the doctrine of the Mass, and the child is led to see that the different lessons in the Catechism are not all of equal importance, but have more or less importance in the degree that they are related to the Holy Sacrifice. Serving at Mass, educational visits to the church and sacristy, study circles on the Eucharist for older children, the Altar-bread offering at the Offertory—these and similar practices are recommended by the Abbé Poppe to help the re-orientation of all religious instruction towards the Eucharistic Altar."[1]

The Secondary School (Age Twelve and Upwards). The Liturgy Cycle.

We have worked out the following projects in this stage.

1. *A Reference Book on the Mass.*—We have combined classes to search for materials. Sometimes a class wishes to make one for itself. All are sent foraging for matter, cuttings, articles, appreciations, references to attacks, contemporary comments, illustrations, pictures of famous churches, altars, sacred vessels, vestments—in fact, anything that bears on the Mass. The class or combination of classes is divided into committees—the one deals with the history of the Mass, the other with sacred vessels, etc. The materials are sorted out among the various committees, and prepared by them. A bibliography is prepared. The condition for admittance is that a pupil could recommend only the books he read, and he is expected to add a brief review of them for the guidance of others. An index is added. The different parts are got together,

[1] p. 105.

and the whole is encased between two stiff covers. The book is open to the contributions of all pupils, and its various divisions are available for reference at all times.

2. *Study Circles.*—Study circles on the Mass were formed. The aim was twofold: *first,* to introduce the pupils into the many-sided wonders of the Mass—history, liturgy, theology—in the hope that an interest might be awakened in the individual which would be continued in after-school years; *secondly,* to foster the ideal of the lay apostolate, so that our children leaving school may know the terms in which to describe our liturgy to Protestants.

3. *A Mass Club.*—One school formed a Mass Club. The school is situated in the district where the first Catholic settlement was made. That inspired the idea. The club became a research group. The supposed site of the first Mass was investigated, through the public library and Catholic references. The club visited the place and interviewed the oldest inhabitants, seeking reminiscences. As a result of enquiries and research, it was established that the first Mass was celebrated on a large flat rock clinging to the side of a steep cliff overlooking the town. Snaps were taken, and an interesting brochure was added to the library list. Proposals were made to do the same for the diocese. This work was done outside class time, but reports were made periodically. It was a very interesting project.

4. *A School Altar Society.*—The girls formed a branch of the parochial Altar Society. The branch took care of the special laundry—purificators, corporals, and lace work. In their embroidery class artistic work for the Altar was attempted. The boys formed a Mass Servers' Club. Each week the service was detailed. If a boy missed his duty he was fined a penny. At Easter time the fines amounted to something, which the pastor augmented, and the club had a picnic. In some churches the club provides the collectors and ushers on Sunday. The children's Mass is a special charge.

" Our elementary schools have one great advantage over other kinds of Catholic schools, in their close association

with the parish priest and the parish church. When both parties—priest and school—take full advantage of this association, the religious results are very striking. When the school is allowed and encouraged to do things in the church, to be responsible on occasions for the singing of Mass or Benediction, to answer the priest corporately at Mass, to undertake the ordinary service of the Altar, to perform a Christmas mystery play, and so on—thus the religious instruction gets the stimulus and reality through constantly having real purposes and real projects to work for."[1]

The project principle, as applied to the teaching of religion, aims at bringing the child into contact with his religious environment at as many points as possible—*e.g.*, activities within the Church, activities in the parish, lay-apostolate opportunities. Show the child the need for knowledge of his faith in meeting his needs, and he will more cheerfully tackle it.

5. *A Weekly Calendar.*—We have worked out two projects in calendar making. (1) A class calendar is made each week. Seven children are appointed to the task. Each child has a day. He is expected to give a brief notice of the Saint of the day, the Mass to be said, the colour of the vestments to be worn. The week's calendar is then typed and pasted on a piece of cardboard and hung up each Friday. The exercise introduces the children to reading the Ordo, and is a splendid preparation for devotion to the feasts of the Saints. We have observed some children noting the summaries of the saints given in the class calendar in order to insert them in their Mass-books. When this exercise is kept going through the year, the pupils have a good idea of the sequence of the liturgical year, and of the dates of the Saints' feast days. We have found it an incentive to children to use their Missals. It is a common thing to watch them marking the Sunday's Mass before leaving school on Fridays. Father Rickaby's *Notes on the Ecclesiastical Year* is sufficient reference. (2) Some schools undertook the project of

[1] The Editor of *The Sower*.

furnishing their parish church with a weekly calendar. The pastor provided a notice board in the porch of the church and frequently drew the attention of the congregation to it. The same plan was followed as in the class calendar. Parochial notices—*e.g.*, entertainments, meetings, sodalities —were added to the Saints' summaries. The children were very proud of this work. They felt they had a share in the ongoing life of the parish.

6. *The Parents' Day at School.*—We have conducted a parents' day at school—the mothers came in the afternoon and the fathers in the evening. The aim is twofold; to awaken parental responsibility in the necessity of teaching their children, and to instruct the parents in the Mass. Bringing them to school does much to teach them what we are doing, and to solicit their more active co-operation. The school prepares a programme on the Mass, going through the class drama, the exercises with the model sanctuary. A display of charts, diagrams, scrap-books, and especially the children's home-made Mass-books, make a deep impression. More than once have we heard parents say that the Mass will mean much more for them in future.

The Parents' Part.—"Religion is for us the subject that leavens all the school work, working in, and on, and upon the school subjects, permeating, commingling, correcting, revising all, and diffusing its light and warmth on the schoolroom. That is our ideal, and to achieve it we must have the co-operation of home and parents. Many of our parents are indifferent. We can secure the parents' co-operation by getting in contact with them, by showing our interest in their children, by pointing out their duties as parents, and by outlining the way of fulfilling all, at a parents' day at school."[1]

7. *The Use of the Missal.*—"For truly a well-illuminated Missal is a fairy cathedral full of painted windows, bound to carry in one's pocket, with the music and the blessing of all its prayers besides."[2]

[1] *Report on the Schools of the Diocese of Perth*, 1925 (Carroll, Ltd., Hay St., Perth, West Australia).

[2] Ruskin.

In this stage the main thing aimed at is to get the children interested in the Missal, and thus a habit of using it. We have sought that goal through the following routes:

It is necessary to emphasise again that the Mass is the great act of the Liturgy. The Liturgy teaches through experience. The Missal speaks of the Canon as *infra actionem*. The Consecration is a liturgical Action; it is a doing something. The form of Action puts certain thoughts into the mind. Going to Mass puts one into another atmosphere than the one he has been in during the week. The Action sets one thinking. In the Liturgy people are expected to do something, and the doing inspires thought. We act to learn, we act to think, we act to live the Liturgy. The Missal says: "*By* Him and *with* Him and *in* Him." Our aim is to convince the children that participation in the Mass is best done through the intelligent use of the Missal.

(1) *The first difficulty* is to get everyone to buy a Missal. We meet this by having a display of Missals in different bindings. We ask the class to make a score-card by which to compare and evaluate their merits. The score-card deals with the most suitable size, the organisation of the contents—*e.g.*, having the Ordinary of the Mass in the centre made it more convenient—the printing, the binding, the value at the price. Then we compare them with the prayer-books used by the children. In this way we arouse a curiosity about the Missal.

(2) *The second difficulty* is the teaching of the vocabulary of the Mass. We borrowed the model altar from the middle school. Copies of the Missal were given to each member of the class. We held a gallery lesson, following the priest in the Mass for the Sunday. The class learned the topography with the aid of their fingers. At the next class the finger-markers were replaced by pictures. One or two who had their own Missals came along with a marker on the pattern of the large Missal.

(3) *The third difficulty* is to make the first exercises attractive. We read extracts from *God's Wonder Book* of Marie St S. Ellerker, O.S.D., which tells us of her feelings

when for the first time a Missal was placed in her hands. "To me it was and is God's Wonder Book." We decided to study one Mass and discover the "wonder." We began with the detailed analysis of the Ordinary of the Mass given in our text-book.[1]

We count the variable portions of the Mass. The pupils realise thus how much of the Mass they miss without the Missal. A study of the Proper of the Mass was a revelation to many. The character of the Mass is known by the Introit. Joy, sorrow, hope, desire, fear, gratitude, contrition—in short, every feeling of the heart—finds expression in the Introit. We compared seasonal Introits. We discovered that a central fundamental idea runs through the Psalms, prayers, and Scriptural lessons. "We may tell them that attention has been given to the Missal in recent years, and the result of study has shown that the sequence of readings and prayers can be viewed as governed by a systematic educational purpose."[2]

4. *The fourth difficulty* is to maintain interest. The Missal can be made the happy meeting-ground of all we do in religious education. Tradition, history, Sacred Scripture, dogma, devotion are epitomised within its pages. It is "God's Wonder Book," and with this treasure we may attract the minds and win the hearts of our youth. In the Missal we find the history of the Church, tradition, and Sacred Scriptures correlated. We can trace back the history of the Mass as it is reflected in the Missal—the Mass of the Catechumens, the Mass of the Faithful, the two dismissals. The stations bring us back to the great Sees, and we walk along the Appian Way with Peter, or roam around Ephesus with Paul. So with tradition, we see the growth of the Mass. There is a fruitful field for correlating Sacred Scriptures. Set the class to find in the Bible, the Epistles, Gospels, and Psalms of the Missal, and re-establish their contexts. "We have but to glance through a Missal or a Breviary," says Dom Cabrol, "to realise how

[1] *The Sacrifice of the Mass*, J. T. McMahon, pp. 96-114.
[2] *Cf. Orate Fratres*, April, 1927, vol. 1, No. 6, pp. 172-176.

largely Holy Scripture enters into its composition, forming. as it were, the woof of the fabric. In the course of the liturgical year, considerable portions are read of all the books of the Bible from Genesis to the Apocalypse."[1]

5. *The fifth difficulty* was the objection of lack of devotion. Some pupils held that it was more devotional for them to hear Mass with the prayer-books. It is necessary to point out to them the beauty of the Missal prayers. "These prayers teach us how to pray as no other prayers can. They bear the consecration of the age. For over 1,300 years virgins, martyrs, and confessors; the needy, the weary, and the heavily laden; the penitent sinner, the innocent child, the monarch in his palace, the prisoner under sentence of death, have found all the heart longs for in the very same words which we say to-day at Mass."[2]

What better preparation can be made for Holy Communion than the three prayers of the Missal? The one for peace, and the other two, have a beauty and tenderness that cannot be surpassed. We appeal to the class to make them their own. So with others. Encourage them to memorise, for personal use, the invariable parts of the Mass.

Various methods are in use of initiating the pupils to the use of the Missal. The dialogue Mass is a popular way. Its purpose is to concentrate the entire attention on the priest, on what he is doing, and on the manner in which he is doing it. This demands co-operation from the celebrant, because if he goes too fast, the children give up in disgust the attempt at accompanying him. The principle of the dialogue Mass is that the children will learn by doing. Much of the success depends on the lead given by the priest. The results depend also on the thoroughness of the preparation. The Missal should be marked before Mass. Friday will be always suitable for that. The danger of the dialogue Mass is that the reading of the prayers by the children becomes monotonous. It demands time, and unless that is given to it the exercise is more of a distraction than an

[1] *Liturgical Prayer*, Cabrol, p. 1.
[2] *The Sacrifice of the Mass*, J. T. McMahon, p. 98.

edification. It could be done occasionally to renew lagging interest. Our aim in all this is to fill the hearts of our children with an appreciation of, and love for, the Missal as "God's Wonder Book," through a personal habit of using it during Mass.

"No time!" the busy teacher will exclaim. "How find time for all this?" Devoting Friday's instruction to the Mass, all of this, and more, can be done.

In the projects outlined much of the work is carried on outside the period for religion. Our aim is to give an enriched curriculum on the Mass, displaying its many-sided wonders, and from that brilliant array we hope the child will pick something that will be a talisman for life, kept burnished bright by use and devotion. We begin with the present—the action of the Mass as a daily experience in the lives of our children—go back to the past for a background, which increases our appreciation, and then return to the present to make the best use of this "Mysterium Fidei."[1]

[1] The chapters on "The Growth of the Mass" in Rev. John O'Sullivan's *The Visible Church* are very helpful for correlating history and tradition with the Missal.

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